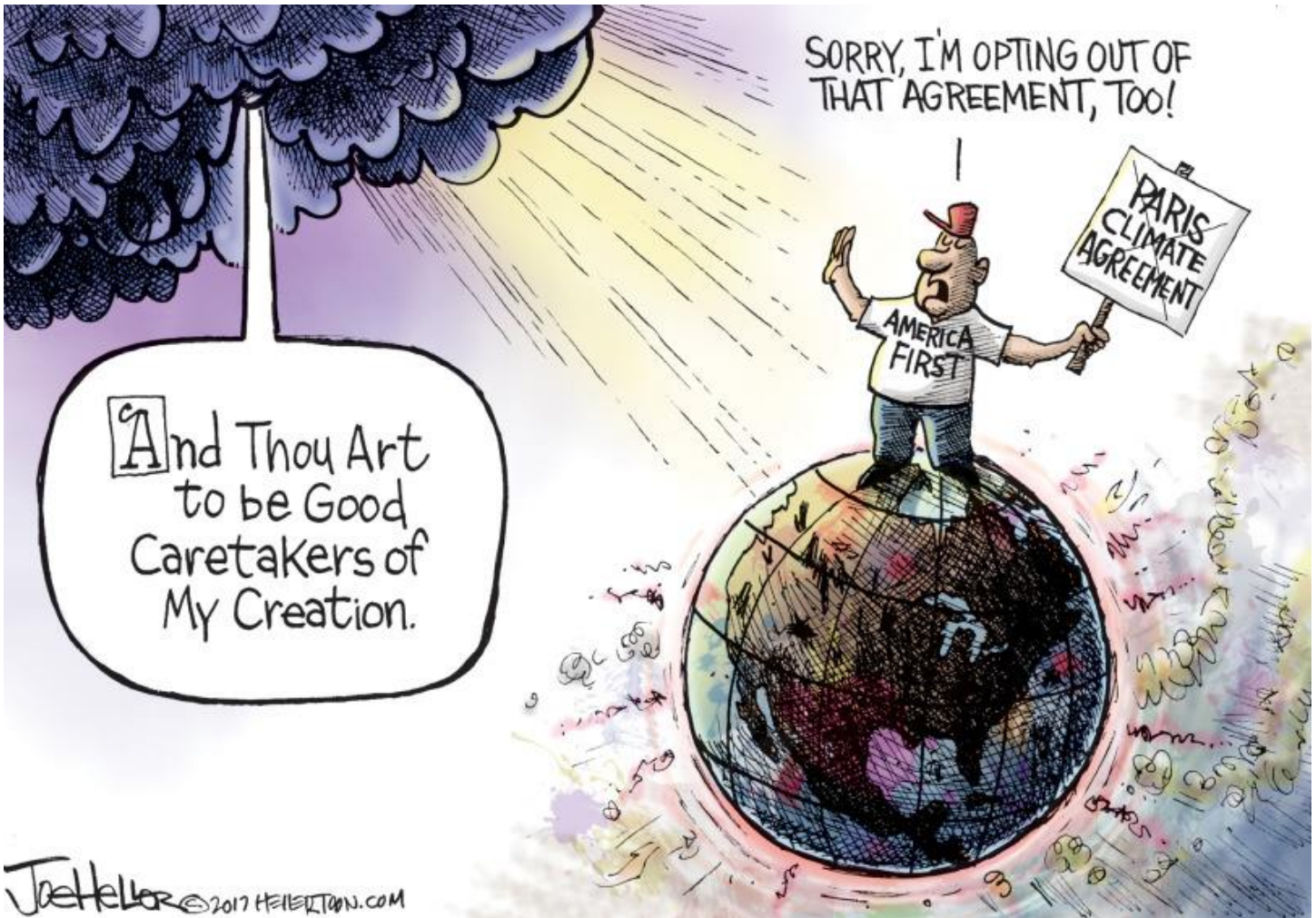


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FRANCE – EUROPE



Editorial : France takes a turn neither left nor right

The Christian Science Monitor

3 minutes

June 7, 2017 —The French invented the meaning of left and right in politics. In the 18th century, commoners sat on the king's left while the aristocracy sat on his right. But after the election of Emmanuel Macron as president in May and his new party's expected victory in legislative elections this month, France may need to update those labels or dispense with them.

That could help other democracies stuck in polarized politics, especially the United States.

Mr. Macron, a former banker who once worked under a Socialist

president, won handily on a promise of political renewal and centrist policies. So far he's been true to his word. His cabinet ministers reflect a range of views. His choice for prime minister, Édouard Philippe, is on the right but was a popular mayor in the left-leaning city of Le Havre in the Normandy region. And only 5 percent of Macron's candidates for the coming election are former members of Parliament. Most are newcomers, including a female bullfighter and a renowned mathematician.

France was ripe to rip up the political rule book. Before the election, 85 percent of people said the country was heading in the wrong direction. Neither of the two traditional parties was strong enough to make it to the final round

of May's presidential contest. Macron's party (En Marche!, or On the Move) was founded only last year. Yet he won with two-thirds of the vote.

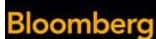
Now the French are agog over Macron and his "cross-party" vision. A new poll by INSEE shows the country's morale is at its highest in 10 years. And Macron has already renamed the party – which he calls a citizens' movement – to La République En Marche! His ministers have begun to clean up government and push power down to local levels. The French, says Macron, have chosen "a spirit of achievement over a spirit of division."

His plans for economic reform still face strong head winds, especially

from unions. But his main goal is to help the French "believe in themselves," he says. In an earlier book, "Révolution," he wrote that authority must not be imposed and that citizens must "remain masters of our own clocks, of our principles, and not abandon them...."

"To establish real political authority ... one must reach a consensus in clarity, not twilight compromises."

For this hope to survive, the local activism that he inspired must not give way to the old ways of assuming that elected leaders will make the correct decisions. To really dissolve left and right in politics, the French must work together in their communities, finding that "consensus in clarity."



Macron's Anti-Populist Swagger Finds Fan in Divided East EU

by Andra Timu @atimu2 More

stories by Andra Timu

4-6 minutes

6 juin 2017 à 17:01 UTC-4 7 juin 2017 à 07:34 UTC-4

- Romania PM Grindeanu says French leader can spur bloc's reform
- Poland has been criticized by Macron over democratic record

Emmanuel Macron's pro-European verve is already proving a thorn in the side of some of the continent's eastern nations. But the French president's rise is being welcomed elsewhere in that region.

Even before his election landslide, Macron took aim at Poland's lurch toward nationalist populism, encouraging proposals that could also counter Hungarian leader Viktor Orbán's self-styled "illiberal democracy." Nearby Romania isn't perturbed. Far from it -- its prime

minister sees Macron as the catalyst for a much-needed European Union overhaul.

"I was among the first leaders to congratulate President Macron on his victory, which is a victory for Europe against populism," Sorin Grindeanu said Tuesday in an interview in his office in Bucharest. "It's now becoming clear that populism has no place in the EU and is losing its supporters one by one."

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Revitalized by Macron and election defeats for populists in the Netherlands and Austria, the EU is once again pushing closer integration -- an endeavor that risks leaving behind member states such as Poland and Hungary that are challenging the bloc's rules and values. Romanians' enthusiasm for the EU exceeds that of most countries. The ex-communist NATO member of 20 million people is also the bloc's second-poorest nation, making it reliant on EU funds.

Romania, one of the EU's fastest-growing economies, has also grabbed the bloc's attention for the wrong reasons. EU officials were critical of government plans in January to ease punishments for corruption. Shortly after Grindeanu's appointment that month, the biggest protests since the fall of communism erupted as hundreds of thousands of people vented their anger at the initiative. Romania is also in hot water over its budget spending.

Grindeanu, four years older than Macron at 43, heads for Paris this week to meet French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe and seek support to join the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. While Macron has threatened sanctions against countries that contravene democratic values, he's also backed integration efforts by other nations, including an endorsement Tuesday for Bulgaria's plan to adopt the euro.

'Doomed to Succeed'

Improving the quality of institutions is key to suppressing populism as the EU gears up for the departure of the U.K. following last year's Brexit

referendum, according to Grindeanu. Cooperation must also be deepened to deal with terrorism and the migrant crisis, he said.

"The process to reform the EU has to succeed, it's doomed to succeed," Grindeanu said. "It won't be an easy process but we're all committed to make it work."

Grindeanu isn't the only Romanian official traveling this week -- President Klaus Iohannis will meet Donald Trump in Washington on June 9. Romania, which hosts radar equipment for the U.S.'s missile-defense system, is among only a handful of countries to meet NATO's spending target, a bugbear of the American president.

"I have no doubt that the new administration in Washington will maintain the strategic partnership with Romania and even strengthen it," Grindeanu said. "It's very important to consolidate both the European project and strengthen the strategic partnership with the U.S."

French Police Shoot Man Who Struck Officer Near Notre Dame

Matthew Dalton
and Nick Kostov

3 minutes

Updated June 6, 2017 3:38 p.m. ET

PARIS—French authorities locked down the area around Notre Dame Cathedral Tuesday after a man attacked police with a hammer in an assault that prosecutors were investigating as a possible terror attack.

The attacker struck an officer in the head as he patrolled Notre Dame's square and police responded by shooting him in the leg, according to police. Knives were discovered inside a backpack carried by the assailant, police

said, adding that he was being hospitalized. Police said they also found documents on the attacker suggesting he was an Algerian student in his 40s.

The attacker, who was alone, yelled "This is for Syria" when he assaulted police, said Interior Minister Gerard Collomb.

Antiterrorism prosecutors were probing the assault for possible terror links, a spokeswoman for Paris prosecutors said.

The policeman targeted in the attack was lightly injured and receiving treatment, said Christophe Girard, mayor of the district that includes Notre Dame.

The attack set off a scramble to secure one of the world's best-known tourist sites as police sent a warning over Twitter for people to stay away from the area and officers toting tactical gear surrounded the area.

A police officer said that around 900 people were locked in the cathedral for more than two hours. Photos on social media showed people inside with their hands in the air.

The incident occurred at a time when Europe is on edge. On Saturday three attackers killed seven people by driving a truck through a crowd on London Bridge and stabbing revelers in London's Borough Market. One Frenchman died in the London attack and eight

others were injured. Two other French nationals remain missing.

France has been clamping down security at soft targets such as tourist sites ever since 86 people were killed last year in a truck attack on a Bastille Day fireworks display in Nice. A wire fence has gone up around the perimeter of the Eiffel Tower, forcing visitors who want to walk beneath the monument to undergo security checks.

Write to Matthew Dalton at Matthew.Dalton@wsj.com and Nick Kostov at Nick.Kostov@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as 'Paris Police Subdue Assailant at Cathedral.'

Video emerges of Notre Dame 'terrorist' hammer attack (online)

By Associated
Press

3 minutes

By Associated Press June 7 at 8:25 AM

PARIS — The man who attacked police officers patrolling in front of Notre Dame Cathedral, crying out "This is for Syria!" was a former journalist who was working on a doctoral thesis and had not been suspected of radicalization, according to university officials and the French government's spokesman.

Christopher Castaner told RTL radio on Wednesday that police were quickly able to classify the hammer attack as a "terrorist act" because of "the words he said."

Surveillance video emerged Wednesday showing the man lunging at officers on the plaza outside the cathedral, then being shot, according to the footage provided to The Associated Press.

An officer was slightly injured in the Tuesday attack and the attacker remained hospitalized after being shot by police. Police have not released his name.

No group immediately claimed responsibility, but police searching

the man's residence outside Paris found a declaration of allegiance to the Islamic State group, according to the Paris prosecutor's office.

A student identity card showed he was from Algeria and 40 years old.

The university of Lorraine's president, Pierre Mutzenhardt, told France Bleu radio that the man was enrolled as one of its students and had been working since 2014 on a thesis about North African media. He said the man previously worked as a journalist for North African media.

"There'd been no difficulties with him. Nothing strange had been detected," he said.

Today's WorldView

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

His thesis director, Arnaud Mercier, told broadcaster BFM that the suspect spoke Swedish, Arabic and French and that his resume mentioned that he had worked as a journalist in Sweden and Algeria.

"He was someone who believed a lot in democratic ideals, the expression of free thinking, in journalism," Mercier said on BFM. "Nothing, absolutely nothing, foretold that one day he'd be a jihadi who'd want to kill a policeman in the name of I don't know what cause."

Assailant at Paris' Notre-Dame reportedly said, 'This is for Syria'

By Jim
Bittermann, Eliza
Mackintosh and Matou Diop, CNN

Story highlights

- Man attacked officer with hammer, interior minister says
- Assailant was also armed with knives, official says

*Paris (CNN)*The man who attacked an officer Tuesday at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris said, "This is for Syria," French Interior Minister Gerard Collomb said.

The man, believed to be an Algerian student, attacked the officer with a hammer but was also armed with knives, Collomb said.

Collomb said the officer's condition is not serious.

Another officer shot the assailant in the chest, police union spokesman Yves Lefebvre told BFMTV. The attacker was taken to the hospital, and the situation brought under control, police told CNN.

Video posted on social media showed what appears to be the attacker lying motionless on the ground next to a police officer.

Video purports to show Paris attacker on the ground 00:31

The attack caused panic among visitors in the area. France is still in a state of emergency after the November 2015 Paris attacks that killed 130 people. There has been strong police presence on the streets of the capital since then.

Paris is also reeling from an April attack at the Champs-Elysees that left a police officer dead.

Notre-Dame, one of the most popular tourist attractions in Paris, typically attracts long lines of visitors.

Hundreds were holed up inside the cathedral, and photos on social media showed people with their hands in the air.

People on social media said police asked visitors to put their hands in the air during the incident.

The Paris prosecutor's office said it had opened an anti-terror probe, and police on Twitter warned the public to stay away from the cathedral.

Kyle Riches, a tourist from San Francisco, was with his wife walking through the plaza outside Notre-

Dame when they heard gunshots and dropped to the ground.

"My wife and I ran. We were trying to figure out what was going on," he said.

"We saw SWAT teams coming in to clear the area and started running."

He said he and his wife saw police holding their guns up as they ran toward someone.

French police gather Tuesday at a cordoned-off area at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris.

A woman in the area at the time said she heard two shots.

"Everyone started fleeing from the cathedral, and police surrounded almost immediately. It looked as though they had surrounded someone at the stairs down to the Seine (River)," said the woman, who gave her name as Abigail M.

"There was a large crowd in line to go into the cathedral, and when the shots fired, they all started running."

She said police had sectioned off an area around the cathedral and down the street.

"We took cover in a nearby store, and they left us there for about 15

minutes before fully clearing the area," she said. "I saw emergency services, military personnel and what appeared to be police dressed in bomb squad gear."

CNN's Jim Bittermann reported from Paris. CNN's Angela Dewan, Paul Murphy, Justin Lear, Richard Allen Greene, Holly Yan and Joseph Netto contributed to this report.

Newsweek: Paris Police Shoot, Injure Attacker At Famous Notre Dame Cathedral

By Jack Moore and Max Kutner On 6/6/17 at 11:04 AM

4-5 minutes

Updated | A Paris police officer shot and injured a man who attacked him with a hammer near the city's Notre Dame Cathedral on Tuesday, authorities said.

Police launched a security operation near the site shortly after 4.30 p.m. local time, urging passersby to remain clear of the area, after reports of gunfire and a possible attack at the landmark site. The area in front of the cathedral was closed.

France's counter-terrorism office opened an investigation after the attack, the motive for which remains unclear. Police declared the incident over within an hour and the police officer involved sustained only minor injuries.

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The medieval Catholic cathedral is a popular tourist destination and is located on the Île de la Cité in the Seine River. The site was the scene of a terrorism scare in September 2016 when police found a car loaded with cooking gas canisters and bottles of diesel fuel.

**The
New York
Times**

Aurelien Breeden and Benoît Morenne

3 minutes

PARIS — A police officer shot and wounded an assailant armed with a hammer and kitchen knives on the square outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris on Tuesday afternoon, according to the authorities.

The cathedral, a Gothic landmark on the Île de la Cité in the Seine, across from the headquarters of the Paris police prefecture, was sealed off, and about 900 visitors and worshippers were told not to leave until the situation was declared safe. The square was evacuated.

Gérard Collomb, the French interior minister, told reporters that the attack occurred around 4:20 p.m. when the man approached three

On Tuesday, police barricaded tourists inside the church, among them American actor Matthew Currie Holmes, who tweeted the incident in real time.

"We're trapped in Notre-Dame de Paris, something is happening outside. Police sirens can be heard. They are not letting anyone in or out," he tweeted.

He then shared two images, one to say "everyone is safe!" and another showing the crowd with their hands in the air, at the request of police.

France remains in a state of emergency after a series of deadly attacks by jihadis across the country since January 2015. In November 2015, an Islamic State militant group (ISIS) cell killed 130 people in a rampage through the streets of Paris.

In January 2015 an attack on the offices of the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher supermarket left 17 dead. In July 2016, Tunisian national Mohamed Bouhlef drove a lorry into revellers watching the Bastille Day fireworks in the southern city of Nice, killing 86 people.

The incident at Notre Dame comes just three days after the ISIS-claimed vehicle and knife attack on London Bridge and nearby Borough Market that killed seven people.

police officers from behind and started hitting one of them with a hammer.

"This is for Syria," the assailant yelled. At least one officer opened fire, injuring the attacker, who was hospitalized.

The attacker was carrying an identity card describing him as an Algerian student, Mr. Collomb said, adding that investigators still needed to verify his identity, as well as his motivations. He appeared to be acting alone.

"One sees that we have gone from a very sophisticated terrorism to a terrorism where, in the end, any tool can be used to carry out attacks," Mr. Collomb said.

Karine Dalle, a spokeswoman for the Paris archdiocese, said in a text message that the roughly 900 people in the cathedral were notified about the violence and were "sitting

In April 2017, a man shot and killed a policeman on Paris's Champs-Élysées avenue and injured two of his colleagues in an attack also claimed by ISIS. It came just days before the presidential election that Emmanuel Macron would go on to win. During the French presidential campaign, the independent candidate called for the hiring of 10,000 police officers over five years.

"Any number of people could have been shot on the Champs-Élysées, but the guy chose to fire on a policeman," François Heisbourg, chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies Council, who has advised the French government on security, previously told *Newsweek*.

While police officer killings in France are rare (there were six in 2015, the most recent year for which the French government has published data), many in recent years have involved what the government classified as terrorism.

In January 2015, three of the 17 victims killed in the attacks were police officers. Last June, an assailant fatally stabbed a police commander and his partner, also an officer, in their home outside of Paris, streaming the partner's death on Facebook. ISIS claimed responsibility.

calmly" until they were permitted to leave. Two auxiliary bishops were also present, Ms. Dalle said, and reassured the crowd.

There were no signs of panic. A witness in Notre-Dame reported on Twitter that visitors and worshippers were safe.

Three major terrorist attacks in France, in January 2015, November 2015 and July 2016, claimed more than 230 lives, and the country remains under a state of emergency.

Landmarks across France, the world's most-visited country, are considered especially vulnerable, despite constant policing.

In September, a group of women suspected of plotting a terrorist attack were arrested after a car filled with gas canisters was found near Notre-Dame.

There have also been nonfatal attacks on French law enforcement by extremists, including at the Paris Orly Airport in April 2015 and during the Bastille Day truck ramming in Nice last July. In February, a machete-wielding assailant attempted to stab a French soldier outside of the Louvre Museum in Paris.

French politicians have tried to use such incidents to expand authority for French police. "The uniform no longer protects. On the contrary, it is a target that exposes those who wear it," Eric Ciotti, then a leader in France's since-dissolved Union for a Popular Movement party, said before France's National Assembly in 2015. After the Champs-Élysées attack in April, Marine Le Pen, then running for French president, said, "Our police officers are attacked because they are symbols of the state."

This article has been updated to include new details about the attack outside of Notre Dame and about the recent history of attacks on French law enforcement officers.

In February, a 29-year-old man armed with two large knives and shouting "God is great" in Arabic lunged at a military patrol near an entrance to the Louvre in Paris and wounded a soldier. The assailant was shot by another soldier.

In March, a gunman was killed at Orly Airport, south of Paris, after attacking a soldier.

In April, days before the first round of France's presidential elections, an attacker opened fire on a police van on the Champs-Élysées, killing one officer and wounding two others. Officers opened fire, killing that attacker.

The attack outside the cathedral came just days before crucial legislative elections, the first round of which will take place on Sunday.

President Emmanuel Macron has announced he will create a special

task force to coordinate the fight against terrorism better.

Speaking to the newspaper *Le Parisien* this week, Mr. Collomb, the interior minister, said that terrorist threats were “extremely high” in Europe and that security forces in France were more vigilant than ever.



Air France's 'Boost' Could Ply Atlantic as Well as Serving Asia

by Michael Sasso
More stories by Michael Sasso

4-5 minutes

6 juin 2017 à 13:57 UTC-4 7 juin 2017 à 03:15 UTC-4

- New unit designed to combat Gulf rivals could also turn west
- Pilot union moves toward vote on discount arm seen as positive

Air France-KLM Group's new low-cost, long-haul Boost arm could provide trans-Atlantic services as well as helping Europe's biggest airline compete with Persian Gulf carriers on routes to Asia.

Asked whether the start-up might also perform westbound flights, Franck Ternier, who heads the company's Air France unit, of which Boost will be part, answered: “Could be, why not?”

Air France-KLM views the SNPL pilot union's plans to meet on June 8 and discuss whether to put Boost contracts to a members' vote as a positive development, Ternier said Tuesday in an interview in Cancun, Mexico. Flight crew belonging to the labor group have already backed the terms in principle after the company scrapped a 15 percent cut in pilot pay at the unit in favor of a 1.5 percent reduction across the whole of Air France's cockpit employees.

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Ternier, who was speaking on the fringes of the International Air Transport Association's annual meeting, added that the Paris-based company will move forward with Boost regardless of pilot backing, adding that “the negotiation itself is finished.” Former Air France-KLM Chief Executive Officer Alexandre de Juniac -- who now heads IATA -- was forced out of the airline after

seeking to expand short-haul discount arm Transavia without pilot backing.

Ternier confirmed that Air France aims to hire about 500 new flight attendants for Boost by mid-2018. Jean-Marc Janailac, De Juniac's successor, said last month that the unit will start medium-length flights this year followed by long-haul operations next summer.

Air France-KLM declined 0.7 percent to 10.65 euros as of 9:12 a.m. Wednesday in Paris. The stock has more than doubled this year, valuing the airline at 3.2 billion euros (\$3.6 billion).

No Fleet Deferrals

New routes will account for about 30 percent of the Boost network, Air France has said, with the carrier operating a mix of Airbus SE A320-series narrow-body planes and twin-aisle A350s, which will replace older, four-engine A340s.

Janailac, who announced plans for Boost in November, wants the

business to have a cost base 15 percent to 18 percent less than the rest of Air France, depending on sector length, to be achieved through lower pay for cabin crew, reduced catering and support costs and charges for a variety of paid-on-board options.

The group has no plans to defer the delivery of 21 A350s to its French arm and seven to Dutch division KLM, or any other planes, Ternier said, especially given a program to expand capacity by as much as 3 percent through 2020 and the need to replace older models.

Discussions are underway about a possible expansion of the company's trans-Atlantic joint venture with Delta Air Lines Inc., he said, without commenting further. Delta CEO Ed Bastian has said recently that the U.S. carrier wants to work more closely with its partner and boost links to Paris and Amsterdam.

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London Attack Spotlights Difficulties in Europe's Security Cooperation

Matthew Dalton
5-6 minutes

PARIS—Europe's fractured landscape of national police and security forces has for years been an obstacle to stopping terror attacks.

The problem may have cropped up again in the failure to stop Saturday's London terror rampage, with Italy and the U.K. contradicting each other over whether one of the assailants had been flagged as a threat to British authorities.

European governments have been working for more than a decade to push their turf-conscious police forces and intelligence agencies to work together more closely, aiming to prevent threat information from falling between the cracks. That effort has yet to produce a cross-border law-enforcement agency akin to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation that can conduct its own investigations across the European Union.

Instead, the region has created a number of multilateral institutions and databases that are supposed to prevent extremists deemed security

risks in one European country from moving undetected into another.

That approach, however, has left security loopholes, to the consternation of U.S. authorities. Washington has expressed exasperation with Europe's welter of security forces and pressed its national governments to band together to fight transnational crime and terrorism. The U.S. is concerned largely because it relies heavily on Europe's capitals to provide information about who should be on security lists, such as the U.S. “no-fly” list, EU officials say.

One of Europe's main cross-border security tools is the Schengen Information System, a pan-European law-enforcement database that contains millions of alerts on stolen cars and documents, arrest warrants and the names of people deemed to be terror threats. The database can also call for a “discrete check,” in which a national police force is notified when the subject of an alert has been stopped elsewhere in Europe. Police across the EU have access to the database in real time.

The database's weak point has long been that governments are under few obligations to feed it with

information or to consult it in law-enforcement operations. Before the Paris attacks of 2015, that laxness produced a crucial mistake: Belgium had entered the name of Salah Abdeslam, one of the Islamic State operatives who planned the Paris attacks, in the database but gave no indication he was a suspected Islamist radical.

Hours after the attack, French police stopped Mr. Abdeslam as he drove from Paris to Belgium. They ran his name against the Schengen database and turned up the alert from Belgium, but then let him go. Mr. Abdeslam remained on the run for months before being arrested in March 2016.

That episode prompted a sharp increase in the amount of information national governments placed into the Schengen database.

They also created a special category of alert for people deemed to be suspected “foreign terrorist fighters.”

Italian authorities in March 2016 stopped Youssef Zaghba, a 22-year-old Italian citizen who was one of the assailants on London Bridge, from boarding a plane to Turkey and discovered extremist propaganda on his phone.

That episode would have been enough for some governments to place an alert in the database for him as a security risk, an EU official.

The Italians, however, didn't do so, having dropped the investigation against him for lack of evidence.

“We don't have strict rules” on using the database, the EU official said. “It's a matter of human judgment.”

Italian authorities said they did flag concerns about Zaghba in bilateral contacts with Britain, but British authorities said he hadn't been “a person of interest” before Saturday's deadly attack.

Europe has also created Europol, an agency based in The Hague that helps coordinate multinational police investigations. It also maintains a database of “persons of interest,” which contains the names of thousands of people deemed to be threats supplied by governments across the bloc.

“Having a name in the database does not lead to an automatic alert,” a Europol spokesman said. “A EU member state has to actively cross-check a name against our database.”

The U.K. has access to the Schengen database even though it

isn't a member of the Schengen area, the region including most of Europe where border checks are largely abolished.

Whether that access will continue after the U.K. leaves the EU is likely to be one of the more sensitive points of exit negotiations.

Write to Matthew Dalton at Matthew.Dalton@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as 'Threats Fall Through Security Gaps.'

**The
New York
Times**

Terrorists Deliver Their Message With Lethal Simplicity

Scott Shane
6-7 minutes

WASHINGTON — In the months after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Western officials worried about additional attacks, possibly using weapons of mass destruction, that could kill thousands. The United States invested heavily in biological and nuclear detectors and other high-tech gear. Jihadist terrorism seemed a menace that would unnerve entire countries and might last for a generation.

More than a decade and a half later, the threat and fear have proved real and lasting. But the death tolls in individual attacks in the West have remained relatively modest, partly because the assailants have learned that they do not need anthrax or dirty bombs to disrupt capitals, terrify tourists, rivet the attention of governments and impress potential recruits.

All they need is a gun, or, if that is too hard to acquire, a truck and a knife. And with simple preparation, such plotting, encouraged and sometimes directed by the Islamic State, is difficult to detect even with robust intelligence and law enforcement surveillance.

In the aftermath of the van-and-knife assault that left seven people dead in London on Saturday night — the third deadly attack in three months in Britain — it is hard to remember that years ago many experts predicted slaughter on a far larger scale.

But the attacks still seem a harbinger of further mayhem, especially at a time when the slow strangulation of the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, means that more young Westerners drawn to its cause are left to plot havoc at home.

Lorenzo Vidino, director of the Program on Extremism at George Washington University, said the

three London attackers might be a case in point.

"Two years ago, these three knuckleheads would have headed to Syria," he said. "Now they can't do that, so they do something else."

Besides the victims killed or maimed, terrorism proves again and again its ability to draw obsessive news coverage and to polarize society. It poses a test for leaders, who must weigh what they want to say to fellow citizens and the future impact of their words.

President Trump, as in other matters, offered a pugnacious contrast to his predecessor, Barack Obama, and to some European leaders. On Saturday night, he offered a standard message of support for London via Twitter:

But after that, he posted an extraordinary series of nine messages, mocking London's mayor and claiming vindication for his own proposed "travel ban" on visitors from certain Muslim countries, now hung up in the courts.

In the wake of terrorism, Mr. Obama usually projected calm and restraint — to a fault, even some supporters said — and always distinguished violent jihadists from Islam and its adherents. His intent was to ensure he did nothing to vilify ordinary Muslims, which he saw as unfair and counterproductive.

Most counterterrorism experts say that intimidating or alienating law-abiding Muslims simply makes it less likely they will report alarming extremism or suspicious activities. British officials have said they foiled at least 18 terrorist plots since 2013, often with the help of tips from the Muslim community.

Mr. Trump, perhaps with American supporters rather than security tactics in mind, often makes a point of attaching the "Islamic" label to terrorism and extremism. This time, his eagerness to do battle with "slow and political" courts that have repeatedly rejected his travel ban

and critics like Mayor Sadiq Khan of London, the first Muslim to lead a major Western capital, overcame any more deliberative strategy.

Bruce Hoffman, a Georgetown University professor who has advised the American government on terrorism for years, said it was "a strategy of provocation" and important for leaders not to respond viscerally.

"Any reaction that's immediate and emotional rather than sober and considered plays into the terrorists' hands," Mr. Hoffman said.

Though he was often critical of Mr. Obama, Mr. Hoffman endorsed the former president's care in responding to attacks. "His measured and calm response was right," Mr. Hoffman said.

At the moment, certainly, the fear of jihadist terror in the United States is not nearly so acute as it is in Europe. Americans feel relatively protected from attack, both by oceans and by the relative affluence and assimilation of its Muslim population, which is small by European standards.

Mr. Vidino, who is completing a study of jihadist attacks in the West during the three years since the Islamic State declared its own state in parts of Syria and Iraq, counted 52 attacks in that time, leaving 402 dead. While France led the count, with 17 attacks and 239 dead, the United States came next, with 16 attacks and 76 dead. Britain had five attacks and 35 deaths.

Still, the attacks in Europe have created an atmosphere of apprehension unlike anything in the United States. "It's shaping day-to-day life in Europe," said Mr. Vidino, speaking from Italy. "It's a completely different mind-set."

The same night as the London attack, he noted, a firecracker panicked a crowd watching a soccer match on a large outdoor screen in Turin, Italy, causing a stampede that

injured 1,500 people, including a 7-year-old boy left in a coma.

Such divergent levels of fear could partly derive from the usual level of lethal violence, far higher in the United States than in Europe. Mr. Trump used the London attack to take a swipe at gun control, declaring, "Do you notice we are not having a gun debate right now?"

But the last major jihadist attackers in two episodes in the United States, in San Bernardino, Calif., and in Orlando, Fla., used guns to kill 14 people and 49 people, more than the seven deaths in London. And former Representative Gabrielle Giffords of Arizona, who was severely wounded in a 2011 shooting and is now an advocate of gun control, responded to the president's Twitter post with a statistic about gun violence in America:

That total includes suicides using firearms as well as homicides.

Ms. Giffords's protest reflected the modest news media attention to routine violence compared with the saturation coverage of the slaughter of strangers by religious fanatics.

Despite its brutality, the Islamic State, which claimed responsibility for the London attack, has so far largely avoided the backlash that has sometimes been provoked among potential recruits by the killing of innocents.

Daniel Byman, a Georgetown professor and author of several books on terrorism, said that jihadists showed no revulsion over the recent bombing of young fans of the singer Ariana Grande in Manchester, England, on May 22.

"These are pathetic targets," he said, mocking the suicide bomber's thinking: "I stuck it to the enemy — I attacked teenagers at a concert."

For the Islamic State, even more than for other extremist groups like Al Qaeda, "part of their brand is, 'We're the most violent,'" he said. "And it seems to be working."

**The
New York
Times**

London Attackers Slipped By Despite an Avalanche of Warnings

Katrin Bennhold
9-11 minutes

Rukmini Callimachi and

LONDON — Islamic State propaganda had been found in the bag of one attacker while he was trying to board a flight in Italy. An F.B.I. informant said he had raised alarms about the second attacker two years ago. The third attacker,

denied asylum in Britain, appeared to have sneaked in from Ireland.

The warning signs about the three assailants in a white van who smashed and stabbed their way through a trendy London neighborhood tumbled into the open

on Tuesday, compounding the pressure on the police and Prime Minister Theresa May to explain them.

What has become clear since the Saturday night assault is that again and again, the young men who killed

seven people before they were shot to death by the police had been reported to law enforcement authorities, bumping into what should have been the country's security net, only for those signals to be played down, ignored or missed.

The latest revelations have placed Mrs. May, a former home secretary who was in charge of counterterrorism for six years before taking over as prime minister last year, under intense scrutiny two days before a general election. Even her own foreign secretary, Boris Johnson, a former London mayor, voiced the question many here are asking.

"How on earth could we have let this guy or possibly more through the net — what happened?" he asked in an interview on Sky News.

Some of the missed warnings were especially glaring because they came from the very people the British government had entrusted with identifying extremists.

Usama Hasan, a former Islamic extremist who now works with the police to help de-radicalize others, said he had a physical altercation in a London park less than a year ago with one of the assailants, Khuram Shazad Butt.

Mr. Butt's brother, Saad, who did paid work for the police on counterextremism issues and was estranged from the assailant, missed signs of how dangerous his brother's extremism had become.

Other warnings had also been raised about Mr. Butt, 27, who held odd jobs, including at KFC and a six-month stint as a customer service trainee for the London subway system that ended in October. His second child was born weeks before the attack, neighbors said.

In 2015, an F.B.I. informant, Jesse Morton, wrote a report to his handler in the United States, identifying Mr. Butt as a person to watch because of what Mr. Morton described as his rising role in extremist chat rooms run by Al Muhajiroun, an organization banned in Britain because of its sprawling links to terrorism.

"My handler got back to me and said it was 'excellent work' and forwarded it to the head office," said Mr. Morton, a former Qaeda recruiter from New York who served prison time on terrorism charges before recanting and agreeing to work undercover for law enforcement.

Mr. Morton, who recently started Parallel Networks, an organization combating extremism, said it was unclear to him whether his F.B.I.

report had been forwarded to British officials. A spokesman for the F.B.I., Andrew C. Ames, said the agency had no comment.

Even excluding the F.B.I. report, plenty of alarms were ringing for the British authorities about Mr. Butt.

Neighbors and friends noticed his behavior, including a mother of three who lived in the same apartment building as Mr. Butt in Barking, a suburb in eastern London.

The mother, Erica Gasparri, was quoted by The Guardian as saying she confronted Mr. Butt two years ago after he tried to convert her son to Islam. When she found him in a local park, she recalled, Mr. Butt said he was ready to do "in the name of Allah what needs to be done, including killing my own mother."

Ms. Gasparri said she had called a police hotline and passed on photographs she had taken of him, but never got a call back.

At the KFC where he worked in Barking, employees were on edge after a video surfaced of Mr. Butt alongside other Muhajiroun members sparring with the police, who were called to a London park where the men had unfurled an Islamic State flag, said Ishtiaq Ahmed, whose brother worked at the same restaurant.

That video clip was also featured in a Channel 4 television documentary broadcast last year, "The Jihadis Next Door," about extremists living in Britain.

Meet the Former Extremist Who Flagged a London Attacker in 2015

Jesse Morton, a former Al Qaeda recruiter who became an informer, knew the London attacker Khuram Shazad Butt and flagged him to the F.B.I. in a report in 2015.

By A.J. CHAVAR, CAMILLA SCHICK and RUKMINI CALLIMACHI on June 6, 2017. Watch in Times Video »

Meanwhile, in Italy, the authorities allowed the second attacker, Youssef Zaghba, to walk past them last year at an airport security check, even though he was carrying Islamic State propaganda. Mr. Zaghba, 22, an Italian of Moroccan descent, was en route to Syria to fight for the Islamic State when he was stopped in March at the airport in Bologna. He was traveling on a one-way ticket, and the authorities found Islamic State material on one of his electronic devices, said two former European intelligence officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter.

Giuseppe Amato, the chief prosecutor in Bologna, told a different account to Radio 24 in Italy, saying that Mr. Zaghba had been stopped en route to Istanbul because he was carrying nothing more than a knapsack, which raised suspicion.

"He told the security guard, who checked him — and then he corrected himself — that he was going to be a terrorist," Mr. Amato said.

Mr. Zaghba was arrested and his belongings were confiscated, but after a judge charged with verifying the accusations against him found there were no grounds to hold him, they were returned, "so the contents on his device" were not examined, Mr. Amato said.

Still, Mr. Amato said that Mr. Zaghba had been singled out as a "suspicious person" to the British authorities.

"We did everything we could do," he said. "But there was no proof he was a terrorist."

Free to move around in Italy, Mr. Zaghba tapped into that country's little-known Muhajiroun network, said a retired senior European law enforcement official who was keeping tabs on the investigation. While the dates are unclear, the official said the Italy-based network appeared to have introduced Mr. Zaghba to Mr. Butt.

Al Muhajiroun has been described as perhaps Europe's most effective jihadist recruitment machine. An estimated one-third of European Muslims who have joined the Islamic State, or ISIS, in Syria in recent years were influenced by the network of groups spawned by Al Muhajiroun and one of its founders, Anjem Choudary, a lawyer turned radical preacher. In Britain alone, at least half of all terrorism cases have publicly documented links to Mr. Choudary, including the 2005 London transit bombings and the killing of a British soldier, Lee Rigby.

"Muhajiroun has significantly been involved in preparing and recruiting for ISIS," said Rashad Ali, a resident senior fellow of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, a London-based research group that focuses on countering extremism.

Al Mahajiroun has haunted and taunted British security services for two decades. Co-founded in 1996 by Mr. Choudary and another radical cleric, Omar Bakri, the group was banned in 2004. But splinter groups promoting the same ideology kept resurfacing under different names until Mr. Choudary was convicted of promoting the Islamic State and jailed in 2016.

The third attacker, identified as Rachid Redouane, 30, was denied asylum in Britain in 2009, according to news reports, and moved instead to Ireland, where he married, worked as a pastry chef and lived for a time in Dublin. He apparently managed to sneak into Britain through the porous Irish border to join the other attackers.

Khuram Shazad Butt, left, in a London park last year, when he was said to have attacked a counterextremism advocate. Usama Hasan

Of all the warning signs about Mr. Butt, the most detailed account was offered in an interview on Tuesday with Mr. Hasan, the member of the AVE network of former extremists and the head of Islamic studies at the Quilliam foundation.

Last July 6, Mr. Hasan said, he ran into Mr. Butt at a Muslim family fair in East London. He was standing beside a fairground ride that his 9-year-old son had just mounted, when Mr. Butt, wearing a traditional Muslim robe and headdress, assailed him with abuse. "You take money from the government to work against Muslims. You spy on Muslims," he raged. "You are a murtadd," an epithet used by the Islamic State.

Then he tried to charge Mr. Hasan.

"He ran straight for me with his face contorted in hatred," Mr. Hasan recalled.

A fight ensued with multiple people, including Mr. Butt's wife, dressed in a face-covering veil. Mr. Hasan reported the episode to the police, emailing them photos of Mr. Butt that one of his family members had taken on a cellphone.

He told them Mr. Butt had displayed all the outward signs of a radicalized political Islamist he knew so well from his own past in radical circles and more recent de-radicalization work: the combination of a pious Islamic dress and long unkempt beard with the angry demeanor and the rehearsed lines.

"I told them I was certain these guys were Al Muhajiroun," Mr. Hasan said. "I said they are a national security threat. They need to be monitored."

The police constable on duty assured him that his concerns had been passed on to the Metropolitan Police's counterterrorism unit, SO15, Mr. Hasan recalled.

Six months later, in January, Mr. Hasan said, he received a phone call. The police had identified Mr. Butt, but no charges were brought. "I am sure this man will sooner or later be arrested in some terrorism plot,"

he recalled telling students in May at a lecture at Cambridge University.

On Tuesday morning, after having seen photographs of Mr. Butt in the news media, Mr. Hasan emailed the

constable who had dealt with his assault case.

"Could you please confirm that my assailant in the above case (CAD 7943 06JUL16) is the same Khuram Butt who was one of the London

Bridge terrorists over the weekend?" he wrote.

Correction: June 7, 2017

An earlier version of this article misstated part of the name of the

Italian news outlet that interviewed Giuseppe Amato, the chief prosecutor in Bologna. It is Radio 24, not Radio 25.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

London and Giovanni Legorano in Rome

8-10 minutes

Updated June 7, 2017 2:34 a.m. ET

U.K. and other Western security agencies were seeking to nail down international connections of the attackers in London's weekend rampage, as it emerged that one of them had tried to go to Syria from Italy.

Authorities had been warned about at least two of the attackers but weren't actively monitoring them before the attack, exposing the difficulty national security services have keeping tabs on extremists and communicating with their foreign counterparts.

Security agencies are probing possible links to Islamist networks of Moroccan origin, a Western security official said Tuesday, focusing on the movements and connections of two of the attackers: Youssef Zaghba—a 22-year-old dual Italian-Moroccan citizen police identified on Tuesday—and Rachid Redouane, a 30-year-old Libyan-Moroccan with an Irish identity card.

They are also investigating a mostly South Asian group in London that has been a fertile recruiting ground for Islamic State in Syria, the official said. The third attacker, 27-year-old Khuram Butt, was a Pakistan-born British citizen known to U.K. authorities, but police have said no intelligence suggested an attack was being planned.

"People are going to look at our front pages today and they're going to say, 'How on earth could we have let this guy or possibly more through the net?'" Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson told Sky News, adding security services would have to answer to how Butt and the others were able to stage the attack.

Another security official said the attack was potentially put together quickly and it was still too early to draw conclusions about which of the three attackers led the operation and how deeply their networks extended in Britain and abroad.

The three men, all residents of east London, mowed down pedestrians

in a van on London Bridge and slashed their way through the popular Borough Market pub-and-restaurant area before being shot and killed by police.

Another of the seven people killed in the attack was identified Tuesday as 28-year-old Australian nurse Kirsty Boden, whose family said she was killed as she ran toward the attack in an effort to help people on the bridge. One man, Roy Larner, a fan of a southeast London football club Millwall, survived after being stabbed five times while trying to shield people from the attackers, reportedly while yelling "I'm Millwall!"

In identifying Zaghba on Tuesday, U.K. police said he hadn't previously been a "subject of interest." But Italian officials said Zaghba had been prevented from boarding a flight from Bologna to Istanbul in March 2016 after Islamic State propaganda was found on his phone, and that they had shared their concerns about him with the British.

Zaghba told authorities who stopped him at Bologna's airport that he "wanted to be a terrorist," but then immediately distanced himself from the statement, Bologna Prosecutor Giuseppe Amato told Italian radio station Radio 24.

Italian authorities detained Zaghba for a short time but didn't have enough evidence to press charges, the Italian officials said. Information about him was shared with international intelligence and police sources, and the U.K. was notified separately because Zaghba traveled often to London, Felice Casson, the secretary of the Italian parliament's national security committee said. British officials declined to comment on whether it had received such information.

"We used to worry about the returnees," the Western official said. "Now we don't know what to do about those who could not go to Syria."

In an interview with Italian weekly L'Espresso, Valeria Khadija Collina, identified as Zaghba's mother, was quoted as saying she last heard from her son Thursday. "In hindsight, I now realize that it was a call to say goodbye," said the woman, who added she had been planning to join her son in London imminently to celebrate the end of

Ramadan, and that he had been trying to reach Syria when he was detained last year. She said he showed her videos of Syria, where he hoped to find "pure Islam"—an idea she said he took from the internet. "I always told him that there were terrible things there that they didn't show," she told the magazine. "But unfortunately I wasn't able to change his mind."

Ms. Collina said her son hadn't become radicalized in Italy or in Morocco, where she said he studied information technology at the University of Fez. "However, he had the internet and everything came from there," she told L'Espresso, adding he hung out with "the wrong people" once he moved to London. The Wall Street Journal was unable to reach her.

Authorities are investigating possible connections between Zaghba and radical networks in Morocco and its diaspora in Europe, the Western security official said. Security officials also want to know whether Redouane linked up with Islamic State networks in Ireland, where he lived from 2012 until at least 2014, or during a 2014 trip to Morocco.

Western security agencies are looking at networks in the Dublin area, from where they say a number of Libyan and Moroccan militants are known to have either left for Islamic State's territory in Syria or communicated with the group.

Redouane was once married to a woman with whom he had a young child, according to two of the woman's social-media contacts. One said the woman had posted on Facebook that the couple split in part over child-rearing differences, with Redouane wanting to control how the child was dressed and trying to stop her from swimming.

In London, authorities are investigating connections between Butt—who neighbors said had appeared in a TV documentary called "The Jihadis Next Door" that aired last year—and a London Islamist network that has groomed jihadis for decades, including Islamic State recruits. The film showed Butt linked to extremist preacher Mohammad Shamsuddin, a leading figure in an offshoot of the banned al-Muhajiroun network.

Neighbors of Butt in the Barking neighborhood of east London have

described him as a father of two who proselytized and sought out children in a park to lecture them on religion. He had worked in the London Underground subway system as a trainee for just under six months until October last year, London's transport authority said in a statement.

At least one neighbor said police had been alerted about Butt. Quilliam, a counter-extremism organization, said Tuesday it had also reported him to police and counterterrorism authorities last summer after he allegedly lunged twice at one of the think-tank's founding advisers.

In July, at a family event for Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, Butt went on a loud tirade against Usama Hasan, Quilliam's head of Islamic Studies. He said: "You believe we come from apes," Quilliam said in a statement.

Butt continued to verbally attack Mr. Hasan in front of both of their families and accused him of being paid by the British government to spy on Muslims.

"You support gay marriage," Butt said at the time, according to Quilliam. "How dare you come to a Muslim event, you are an apostate."

Haras Rafiq, chief executive of Quilliam, said it was unclear why it appeared that no action was taken on the reports, adding intelligence agencies needed to reflect on that. A London police spokeswoman didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

In the wake of the latest attack, authorities have increased security measures around the city, including putting up protective barriers along several bridges. Much of Borough Market and the surrounding area remained cordoned off on Tuesday.

Police early Wednesday said they had arrested a 30-year-old man as they searched a property in east London as part of their investigation into the attack, a day after arresting a 27-year-old man. Twelve other people have been arrested and released since the attack.

—Matthew Dalton, Pietro Lombardi, and Riva Gold, Jon Sindreu, Jason Douglas and Jenny Gross contributed to this article.

Write to Benoit Faucon at laurence.fletcher@wsj.com and Appear in the June 7, 2017, print
benoit.faucon@wsj.com, Laurence Giovanni Legorano at edition as 'London Probe Focuses
Fletcher at giovanni.legorano@wsj.com On Terrorists' Wider Links.'

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL.**

U.K.'s Economic Divide Takes Focus as May's Lead in Polls Shrinks Ahead of Election

Jason Douglas and Wiktor Szary

6-8 minutes

June 6, 2017 10:24 a.m. ET

BIRMINGHAM, England—Disparities in wealth, income and opportunity have fueled a backlash against establishment politicians across Europe and in the U.S. In Britain, the economic divide shaping the dynamics of Thursday's parliamentary elections is the gap between London and the rest of the country.

A weekend Islamist terror attack—one of three this year, including a suicide bombing outside a pop concert in Manchester late last month—has focused voters' attention and candidates' rhetoric in recent days on security. But a major economic issue driving the campaign is how to close the chasm between the booming capital and less-prosperous regions.

Prime Minister Theresa May's governing Conservative Party has lost ground in opinion polls since she called the snap vote in April, but is still leading. The latest surveys put her lead over the main opposition Labour Party anywhere between 4 and 11 percentage points.

Andy Street, the newly elected mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority, a huge slice of central England encompassing cities such as Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton, is trying to reduce the area's imbalance with London. Emblematic of the split, he says: infrastructure spending per person in London is seven times as high as in his region.

"It's not bloody surprising we haven't been able to grow the economy that fast," the 53-year-old mayor said.

London is more than eight times as populous as Birmingham, the country's second-largest city, and generates almost a quarter of the U.K. economy's entire annual output, compared with around 15% three decades ago. By contrast, Paris accounts for less than 10% of France's economy, while Berlin makes up less than 4% of Germany's.

Last year's Brexit referendum threw the divide between capital and country into sharp relief. London—a global entrepôt and financial hub—overwhelmingly voted to remain in the European Union, as did Scotland and Northern Ireland. Most of England and Wales chose to leave.

That result has given renewed impetus to stop-start efforts to boost regions scarred by deindustrialization and political neglect. Both main parties are jostling to persuade voters they have the best strategy for renewing regional economies in the world's fifth-biggest economy.

The differences are apparent in measures ranging from health and education to income and business launches. London and the South East incubated around a third of all new businesses set up in the U.K. in 2015; fewer than 3% of the total were established in the northeast of England. A male born in Kensington and Chelsea in 2014 could expect to live to 83, while a male born in Blackpool would likely live to 75. Annual disposable income per person in Leicester, in the Midlands, is around a quarter the level in Camden in North London.

Birmingham a century ago was an industrial powerhouse that rivaled London. Today it lags behind. Workers in West Midlands produced 47% fewer goods and services an

hour in 2015 than their counterparts in London.

In recent years, growth has picked up and unemployment has declined. The region has some big global businesses, too—it is home to luxury auto maker Jaguar Land Rover, a unit of India's Tata Motors Ltd.

But firms say they can't easily find workers with the right skills. Chris Poole, managing director at the Birmingham office of Robert Walters PLC, a recruitment firm, said technology and engineering firms in particular "are really struggling to recruit."

Mrs. May's Conservatives have put addressing the regional divide at the center of their policy platform. In its manifesto, the party said closing the gap between London and the rest of the country is "the biggest prize in Britain today."

The party pledged extra investment in housing and infrastructure as well as scientific and technical colleges to train workers in new skills. It also said it would relocate government departments out of London to support local economies.

The main opposition Labour Party, led by Jeremy Corbyn, also has put regional revival on its agenda, saying in its manifesto that it would establish a national investment bank with a network of branches to finance infrastructure investment in left-behind areas.

"Our economy has become dangerously unbalanced; skewed towards London and the financial sector, while our once proud industrial communities have had to live through decades of managed decline," Mr. Corbyn said at in recent campaign speech.

At Thursday's election, Labour is facing a stiff challenge in the West Midlands, where Mrs. May is hoping

to add to the Conservatives' tally of just seven seats.

In a promising sign for Mrs. May and a worrying one for Mr. Corbyn, Mr. Street, who last year quit as chief executive of a British department-store chain called the John Lewis Partnership, won the mayoral race May 4 on a Conservative ticket. He sees improving locals' skills and productivity and attracting corporate headquarters to the West Midlands as critical to the area's future.

Experts say that narrowing the economic gap between London and other regions presents myriad challenges. Regions have different problems, ranging from education to transport to housing, said Conor D'Arcy, a policy analyst at the Resolution Foundation, a nonpartisan think tank focused on living standards. "Growth on its own isn't enough," he said.

And although Brexit and the divisions it exposed helped drive these issues to the top of the political agenda, some worry that the formidable task of negotiating the U.K.'s exit from the EU may push regional development onto the back-burner.

"The big concern now is that Brexit overwhelms the government so much that this process stalls," said Simon Collinson, professor of International Business and Innovation at University of Birmingham.

"It's important to remember that regions like ours is where the political backlash that caused Brexit came from in the first place," Mr. Collinson said.

Write to Jason Douglas at jason.douglas@wsj.com and Wiktor Szary at Wiktor.Szary@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as 'Economic Divide Shapes U.K. Vote.'

Bloomberg

Editorial : Britain's Strange Election About Nothing

by The Editors
More stories by
The Editors

3-4 minutes

Oddly beside the point.

Photographer: Daniel Sorabji/AFP/Getty Images

Britain's vote on Thursday is set to be a textbook example of the limits of elections. When choices are clear, and articulated by strong leaders, elections can move politics forward. When choices aren't clear, and parties don't know what they stand for, votes resolve nothing.

Why the U.K. is Heading to the Polls... Again

Why the U.K. is Heading to the Polls... Again

Six weeks ago, U.K. Prime Minister Theresa May's call for a snap election made sense. With her popularity high and her Labour Party opponents in disarray, she hoped to strengthen her position in Parliament, undercutting her party's euroskeptic hard-liners and making it easier for her to negotiate the

terms of Britain's divorce from the European Union.

Things haven't gone according to plan. New terrorist atrocities have sidelined discussion about Brexit, such as it was. May has waged a weak campaign and seen the once-commanding lead of her Conservative Party evaporate. A Labour win still looks unlikely, but anything less than a big Tory victory

will leave May diminished, and the outlook for Brexit even more muddled.

Clear thinking from leading voices in business, economics, politics, foreign affairs, culture, and more.

Share the View

Fact is, on the two main issues -- Britain's exit from the EU and the persistent threat of Islamist terrorism -- there isn't much difference

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL.**

7-9 minutes

June 6, 2017 7:25 p.m. ET

London

Theresa May is gambling this week's election, her political career, and Britain's future on a theory. The prime minister and her advisers believe that if their Conservative Party moves far enough to the left, it can mop up the economically disaffected but risk-averse voters turned off by Labour's hard-left turn in recent years.

It's not working. Mrs. May's early 20-point lead has all but evaporated. This despite a Labour Party in disarray with a leader, Jeremy Corbyn, whose views on economics and foreign policy are out of step with most of his own party, let alone the country. Mrs. May will probably still be prime minister after Thursday's vote. But she'll preside over a party adrift and divided, opposite a newly emboldened radical fringe in Labour.

Mrs. May's strategy is nothing new. Many corners of the Conservative Party never made their peace with Margaret Thatcher's gutsy embrace of free markets. They complained Thatcher had emboldened right-wing ideologues. The economic rejuvenation that the Thatcherites engineered had won over voters for a time. But to the detractors, big losses in 1997 and 2001 revealed that Thatcherism was too socially divisive to be politically sustainable.

Mrs. May became party chairman in 2002 and established herself as a tribune for those trying to return the Conservatives to their supposed moderate glory. In her first speech to a party conference as chairman, Mrs. May more or less admitted that the caricature of the Tories as the "nasty party" was accurate and that the party needed to broaden its appeal.

between the main parties. The Labour opposition isn't promising to reverse Brexit, only to make it less disruptive. (It hasn't said how.) On counterterrorism policy, both parties have deplored the attacks with equal conviction and run up against the same familiar, intractable trade-offs between security and civil liberties.

All of which has lent a strange air of near-irrelevance to Thursday's vote. Issues of world-historical import bear down on British voters -- and

the election has had almost nothing to say about them. Instead, the parties have been squabbling about May's so-called dementia tax and Labour's half-baked economic plan.

Taking the parties' programs at face value, the Tories make a far better case. Yet it's come down to a confidence vote on the two leaders, May and Jeremy Corbyn. At a moment of great political stress, Britain finds it has little confidence in either.

Sternberg: How Theresa May Led the Tories Astray

Joseph C. Sternberg

At first this meant playing down traditionalist views on social issues such as gay marriage, while promising better management of the welfare state, especially the National Health Service, instead of an overhaul. Under Prime Minister David Cameron the Tories became a party of green-energy mandates and middle-class subsidies such as child-care allowances.

Mrs. May now hopes to complete the party's transformation, with help from advisers who first joined her staff when she was home secretary in Mr. Cameron's government. Nick Timothy and Fiona Hill, now co-chiefs of staff at No. 10 Downing Street, both come from middle-class roots similar to the vicar's daughter Mrs. May. Both have helped engineer her latest twist on Tory modernization.

Mr. Timothy is eloquent on the need to turn the Conservatives into a working-class party. In an essay last year, he wrote of how he was attracted to the Tories in the early 1990s because their education policies would give a working-class boy from Birmingham like him the best opportunity to improve his life. The Tories, he says, should appeal to working-class voters who crave the competence and stability Conservative governance offers. Voters only need to be persuaded the party has their best interests at heart.

There's a disconnect here. Mr. Timothy wrote that by age 12 he had concluded "Labour, in the pursuit of equality, only hold people back, but it is the Conservatives who help you to go as far as your potential allows." That ought to be an argument for getting government out of the way and revving economic growth. Instead, translated into practical politics, it becomes a pander to lower-income voters, offering Labour-style handouts instead of Thatcher-style opportunities.

Mrs. May started her tenure as prime minister last year with jeremiads against greedy corporations, flirtations with putting

workers on corporate boards, and talk of a "modern industrial strategy." This philosophy reached full flower in the party manifesto last month. That document abandoned Mr. Cameron's pledge not to increase income-tax rates and promised to throw another £8 billion at an unreformed NHS. The manifesto was light on economic growth and heavy on giveaways, such as a regulatory cap on household energy prices.

The trouble is that voters simply don't trust the Tory conversion. Mrs. May has steadily lost ground to Labour during the campaign, despite Mr. Corbyn's stumbles. Polls show voters credit Mrs. May's promise to deliver the "strong and stable" leadership the country needs, and they trust the Tories more on law and order, immigration and Brexit. On a range of other concerns, however, from the NHS to education and housing, Labour has a significant edge in public confidence, suggesting it's poised for a comeback if the economy falters post-Brexit.

Perhaps this explains Mrs. May's biggest campaign fiasco: her botched proposal to reform old-age-care entitlements. The gist of the plan was to equalize subsidies for elderly people, in part by requiring wealthier beneficiaries to apply more of the value of their homes to the costs of care from nurses making house calls.

This should have been a winner for kinder, gentler Tories. It would have been a boon for poorer retirees in nursing homes, who would have received bigger subsidies. It would have come at the cost of wealthier elderly, who currently enjoy heavily subsidized home care and then get to pass their houses to their heirs.

It failed because no matter how much Tory modernizers say they're on the side of the little guy, a skeptical media—and a lot of Labour-inclined "little guys"—don't believe it. Labour, which promises an additional £30 billion for the NHS and free hospital parking, needed only to brand the social-care reform

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as a "dementia tax" and it was doomed.

That raises a question: Can out-Labouring Labour ever be a viable strategy for the Tories—especially when Labour is re-embracing outright socialism? If the party of the right offers only less of the same—money for entitlements, but not as much; strong rhetoric about income inequality, but less action; and so on—voters might as well go with the party they're certain believes in those things. The Tories make a

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compelling case that they can run the entitlement state more competently. But they'll never beat Labour if they try to convince voters they believe more sincerely in government.

Mr. Corbyn's perverse political genius is in failing to convert these political trends into a Labour victory. If Bernie Sanders were British, he'd stand a good chance of winning.

No matter. America's "reformicon" conservatives will be eager to treat a May victory, even a surprisingly narrow one, as vindication of their own attempt to pull the Republican Party to the left. But Mrs. May will win because the opposition is feeble and despite voters' doubts about her economic policies.

Mrs. May and her aides are correct that parties of the right need to do a better job of communicating with voters. But don't mistake that for pandering. Conservatives need to be honest about how freedom—for people, minds and markets—is the solution to our vexing social and economic problems, not their cause.

The main political insight of Thatcher and Reagan was that parties of the center-right must be parties of economic growth. Having wavered since, those parties now risk losing their way entirely. Some centrists will argue, quirks of this campaign notwithstanding, that Mrs. May shows how to win an election. The important question for

INTERNATIONAL

Assault on ISIS's Syria Stronghold of Raqqa Begins

Raja Abdulrahim

7-9 minutes

Updated June 6, 2017 6:33 p.m. ET

U.S.-backed forces in Syria launched a long-anticipated assault on Islamic State's de facto capital of Raqqa, kicking off a battle aimed at recapturing the last major city where the extremists still exert full control.

Fighters from an alliance of Kurdish and Arab factions operating under the umbrella of the Syrian Democratic Forces entered the easternmost neighborhood of the city late Tuesday, the SDF and anti-Islamic State activist groups said.

SDF forces seized six square miles of eastern Raqqa, largely cut off supply lines to the west of the city and took away Islamic State's ability to cross the Euphrates River by knocking out major bridges, said Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis.

The SDF fighters were backed by airstrikes from the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State. U.S. Marines provided artillery support and American pilots flying Apache helicopters aided the push, Capt. Davis said.

As fighting erupted around the outskirts of Raqqa early Tuesday, bakeries in the city closed and most people stayed in their homes, according to a resident. Those who ventured out went to internet cafes to send messages assuring friends and relatives outside the city they were safe or to find out from those who had already fled what escape routes they took, he said.

In announcing the start of the battle early Tuesday, the SDF warned civilians to stay away from the front lines and from Islamic State buildings and headquarters. The Pentagon estimates there are fewer than 1,000 Islamic State militants remaining in Raqqa.

An estimated 200,000 civilians remain in Raqqa, and a spokesman for the International Rescue Committee warned that civilians

could bear the brunt of the assault. Opposition monitoring groups and human-rights organizations have reported a sharp rise in civilian casualties from coalition airstrikes in Syria in recent months.

The start of the operation to retake the city came as U.S.-backed Iraqi government forces battle to retake the last remaining parts of the Iraqi city of Mosul, which was once the extremist group's largest Iraqi stronghold. The battle for Mosul began in October.

The U.S. and its Western allies have long viewed Raqqa as an epicenter for Islamic State planning for terrorist attacks around the world. Those concerns have been compounded by recent attacks in the U.K. and France.

Lt. Gen. Steve Townsend, commander of the anti-Islamic State coalition, said the operation to retake Raqqa would be "long and difficult" but would deliver a "decisive blow to the idea of ISIS as a physical caliphate." He said the fight to wipe out Islamic State would continue after the extremist group is routed from Raqqa and Mosul.

Separately, the U.S. military said Tuesday that it attacked allies of the Syrian regime for the second time in three weeks after they ignored repeated warnings to move away from a base near the Jordanian border, far from Raqqa, used by American forces.

The U.S. is backing Arab rebel groups that have been advancing against Islamic State from the south, putting it on a potential collision course with the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

The SDF launched its campaign to isolate and retake Raqqa in November, and has been laying the groundwork for the final push into the city for months. It has seized Islamic State-held towns and villages around the city, cutting off most avenues of escape.

Last week, in a move that U.S. ally Turkey publicly protested, the Trump administration began

supplying weapons directly to a Syrian Kurdish militia, the People's Protection Units, or YPG, which forms much of the SDF.

Turkey had pressed for Arab rebel factions to lead the fight for Raqqa, a predominantly Arab city. But the U.S. has relied largely on the Kurdish fighters, which Washington considers most capable of confronting Islamic State.

Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim warned on Tuesday that his country would "give the required response" if the capture of Raqqa by the YPG ever threatened Turkey's security. Ankara views the YPG as the Syrian affiliate of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, a separatist group in Turkey that the U.S., Turkey and the European Union have designated a terrorist group.

The YPG and its political wing have used the battle against Islamic State to carve out a semiautonomous Kurdish area across parts of northern Syria and along the Turkish border. "We will never allow our country to be damaged from the results of this cooperation," Turkish state media quoted Mr. Yildirim as saying.

The U.S. has hundreds of special operations forces in northern Syria to train and assist SDF fighters. Besides providing weapons and reinforcement from the air, it is also supplying them with intelligence and logistical support, the U.S. military said.

In anticipation of the battle for Raqqa, Islamic State militants have dug trenches and planted bombs in fields and along roads leading into the city, anti-Islamic State activists said.

In the past week, coalition aircraft have dropped leaflets urging civilians to evacuate, the coalition and activists said. The Pentagon said the SDF has encouraged civilians to leave the city to avoid being trapped and used as human shields by Islamic State or being targeted by snipers.

A Raqqa resident said there were no safe paths out of the city.

On Monday, more than a dozen civilians were killed in coalition airstrikes as they tried to flee the city by boat across the Euphrates, according to three Syrian monitoring groups and residents. The river is one of the few remaining escape routes after both bridges spanning it were severely damaged by earlier bombings.

"We don't know where the bodies are of the people who were struck while they were on the river and were either killed or drowned," a resident said. "When they try to flee [north] the bombs explode under their feet. And when they try to flee south, the coalition carries out airstrikes on them. People are in a state of despair."

Capt. Davis said Raqqa residents were being discouraged from trying to cross the river because the U.S. coalition is targeting suspected Islamic State militants who are trying to do so.

The Pentagon said it was aware of reports of civilian casualties "as a result of strikes on ISIS fighters fleeing Raqqa on barges recently" and would investigate the allegations.

The spokesman for the International Rescue Committee, Thomas Garofalo, said on Tuesday that his group was "deeply concerned for the safety of civilians in Raqqa."

"The IRC has seen a drop in the number of people escaping Raqqa over the past week," Mr. Garofalo said. "Which may indicate ISIS intends to use the 200,000 people still trapped in the city as human shields."

—Dion Nissenbaum contributed to this article.

Write to Raja Abdulrahim at raja.abdulrahim@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as 'Battle to Capture ISIS Stronghold Begins.'

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Forces backed by the United States said on

Tuesday that they had begun a long-anticipated offensive against Islamic State militants in the northern Syrian city of Raqqa, the group's self-proclaimed capital.

The forces, collectively called the Syrian Democratic Forces and made up of Syrian Kurdish fighters and Arab militias, have over the past month surrounded Raqqa from the east, north and west. On Tuesday, they began an assault on the city limits, aided by airstrikes from the United States-led coalition and by artillery.

The battle opened in the middle of a new outbreak of diplomatic turmoil between allies in the fight against the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL.

Even as the initial barrage was beginning, President Trump published Twitter posts excoriating Qatar, the host of the American air base at the heart of the effort. And he declared his support for Saudi Arabia and other Arab neighbors as they moved to isolate Qatar and single it out for blame for terrorism and regional intrigue.

Pentagon officials insisted that the surge in tensions between the Saudi and Qatari camps — both members of the anti-Islamic State coalition — would not affect operations against the militant group in Raqqa and Mosul, Iraq.

In Raqqa on Tuesday, shops were closed and people were staying inside, residents said. Electricity and water were out. Bakeries

were still working but were expected to shut down soon for lack of flour.

One resident said coalition warplanes and drones had attacked ferries transporting vegetables across the Euphrates River into Raqqa, causing the deliveries to halt.

Residents of Raqqa say that in recent weeks numerous Islamic State fighters and their families have left the city, heading southeast along the Euphrates to the city of Mayadeen, in Deir al-Zour Province. Civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure from airstrikes by the United States-led coalition sharply increased as the fighting approached, according to residents.

In Syria, the Islamic State is expected to make a final stand in the province of Deir al-Zour. Its forces have for some time surrounded 200,000 people in a section of the provincial capital, also called Deir al-Zour, that is controlled by the Syrian government.

That has set off a race to Deir al-Zour among an array of rival forces aiming to take control of the nearby border with Iraq.

Moving east from central Syria and the desert city of Palmyra are forces fighting for the government of President Bashar al-Assad, including Syrian Army troops and Iran-backed militias like Hezbollah. Moving north from rebel-held southern Syria are American-backed insurgent groups. The Syrian Democratic Forces attacking

Raqqa also aim to continue southeast to the same area.

On Tuesday, the United States-led coalition also launched airstrikes directly against Syrian government forces for the second time in less than a month. The United States Central Command said that Syrian forces — more than 60 soldiers, with some armored vehicles and heavy weaponry — had breached the security zone around the base at Tanf in southeastern Syria near the Jordanian and Iraqi borders. American and British forces there are training Syrian opposition fighters to battle the Islamic State, and airstrikes were carried out under similar circumstances on May 18, officials said.

There were unconfirmed reports of new forces joining the fray in Raqqa Province too, with pro-government forces moving into the province from the east.

For now, though, the Raqqa offensive could take a long time, with a very high toll, judging from the protracted offensive in Iraq against the Islamic State's other major urban stronghold, in Mosul.

Even with a victory, the aftermath of the Raqqa fight could be difficult, as well, with many residents fearful of the Kurdish militias involved in the attack. The Syrian Democratic Forces say they will hand power to a local council made up of Arab and Kurdish civilians, but in other places where they have done that, like the city of Manbij, many residents say

the councils are a thin facade for the militias' control.

The American military said in a statement that the fight for Raqqa would be "long and difficult" but that along with the Mosul battle, it would "deliver a decisive blow to the idea of ISIS as a physical caliphate."

Lt. Gen. Stephen J. Townsend, the commander of the coalition, said in the statement that it would be hard for the Islamic State to convince new recruits "that ISIS is a winning cause when they just lost their twin 'capitals' in both Iraq and Syria."

He added: "We all saw the heinous attack in Manchester, England. ISIS threatens all of our nations, not just Iraq and Syria, but in our own homelands as well. This cannot stand."

Airwars, an organization based in London that tracks civilian casualties from international airstrikes, called on all forces to take all precautions to avoid harm to civilians.

For weeks, Islamic State fighters have been carting away weapons, supplies and even large generators and telecommunications equipment to their fallback positions in Mayadeen, residents said.

On Tuesday, the Islamic State ordered internet cafes to close by Wednesday, residents said, in order to further limit information reaching the wider world.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Iraqi Forces Close In on Militants in Mosul

Ben Kesling

2-3 minutes

June 6, 2017 3:52 p.m. ET

MOSUL, Iraq—Iraqi troops pushed to the edge of Mosul's historic Old City on Tuesday, as the battle for Islamic State's other major urban stronghold kicked off in neighboring Syria.

The fight for Mosul has been going on since mid-October. Thousands of extremists, many from outside Iraq, are fighting to the death in Iraq's second-largest city. The Iraqi military has backed most of the

extremists into the Old City, in the western part of Mosul, after clearing the eastern part in January.

Islamic State, which first seized Mosul three years ago, has entrenched itself in the neighborhoods it still holds, using residents as human shields, enlisting snipers to shoot those who flee and using vehicles—some of which are booby-trapped—to block streets.

Zinjili is one of the last neighborhoods bordering the Old City where troops are still battling the militants.

"I can't guess about when we will finish the liberation of Zinjili because of the large numbers of civilians there, and we're trying to protect their lives," said Col. Saad al-Abadi, spokesman for the Iraqi Army's 9th Division, which is leading the fight there. "If there were no civilians you wouldn't even have to ask me about a timeline, because we would go right in."

On Tuesday, U.S.-backed forces began their campaign to recapture Raqqa, Islamic State's de facto capital in Syria, to the west of Mosul. Over the weekend, Iraqi paramilitary forces also disrupted an Islamic State supply route between Mosul and Raqqa.

The militants still control a number of Iraqi towns and rural areas, including the extremist way station of Tal Afar in Iraq's northwest.

Across Iraq, security officials are on alert for increased Islamic State attacks during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Islamic State claimed a May 30 bombing at a popular ice cream parlor in the capital, Baghdad.

Write to Ben Kesling at benjamin.kesling@wsj.com

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The New York Times Trump Takes Credit for Saudi Move Against Qatar, a U.S. Military Partner (UNE)

By MARK LANDLER JUNE 6, 2017

President Trump met with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar, in Saudi Arabia last

month. Credit Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

WASHINGTON — President Trump thrust himself into a bitter Persian

Gulf dispute on Tuesday, taking credit for Saudi Arabia's move to isolate its smaller neighbor, Qatar, and rattling his national security

staff by upending a critical American strategic relationship.

In a series of tweets, Mr. Trump said his call for an end to the

financing of radical groups had prompted Saudi Arabia and four other countries to act this week against Qatar, a tiny, energy-rich emirate that is arguably America's most important military outpost in the Middle East.

"During my recent trip to the Middle East I stated that there can no longer be funding of Radical Ideology," he wrote in a midmorning post. "Leaders pointed to Qatar — look!"

Qatar has long been accused of funneling money to the Muslim Brotherhood — which has officially forsworn violence but is still accused of terrorism by some countries — as well as to radical groups in Syria, Libya and other Arab nations. But it is also home to two major American command posts, including a \$60 million center from which the United States and its allies conduct their air war on Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria.

Continue reading the main story

Those contradictory roles may explain the mixed signals the administration sent after Saudi Arabia's unexpected move. Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis initially tried on Monday to smooth over the rift, with Mr. Tillerson offering to play peacemaker and Mr. Mattis insisting it would have no effect on the campaign against the Islamic State.

Less than 12 hours later, however, Mr. Trump discarded that approach by putting his thumb on the scale firmly in Saudi Arabia's favor. His tweets, which a senior White House official said were not a result of any policy deliberation, sowed confusion about America's strategy and its intentions toward a key military partner.

"So good to see the Saudi Arabia visit with the King and 50 countries already paying off," Mr. Trump wrote. "They said they would take a hard line on funding." He added, "Perhaps this will be the beginning of the end to the horror of terrorism!"

Additionally, officials in Jordan said on Tuesday that the country would downgrade its diplomatic relations with Qatar and revoke the license of the Doha-based television channel Al Jazeera, Reuters reported.

On Tuesday evening, the president appeared to be trying to ease tensions. In a call with King Salman of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Trump said that unity among gulf nations was "critical to defeating terrorism and promoting regional stability,"

according to a White House statement.

Administration officials said Mr. Trump was not trying to cause a rupture among Sunni Muslim nations in the Middle East. Rather, they said, he was expressing genuine frustration with Qatar's record and making sure it followed through on the commitments it made in backing a new joint Terrorist Financing Targeting Center, which the president announced last month in Riyadh.

"The U.S. still wants to see this issue de-escalated and resolved immediately, keeping with the principles that the president laid out in terms of defeating terror financing," said Sean Spicer, the White House press secretary.

Mr. Spicer denied that the president was taking sides. He said Mr. Trump had had a "very productive" discussion with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the 37-year-old emir of Qatar, during his visit to Riyadh. But another person briefed on the conversation said it had been noticeably colder than the president's meetings with other gulf leaders.

In Washington, Qatar's ambassador, Meshal bin Hamad al-Thani, expressed surprise at Mr. Trump's tweets. "No one approached us directly and said, 'Look, we have problems with this and this and this,'" he said in an interview with The Daily Beast.

There was little immediate threat to American military facilities in Qatar, administration officials and outside analysts said, not least because Qatar views America's military presence as an insurance policy against the aggressive moves of its neighbors.

But the mood there was jittery. Government officials and news outlets described the cutoff of diplomatic relations, travel and trade as a "siege" and even as an attempt at a coup.

Those jitters have been intensified by suspicions that Russia was behind a cyberattack that published fake information on Qatar's state news agency — a claim the United States is investigating, according to an official briefed on the inquiry, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The official said it was unclear whether the hackers were state-sponsored.

An American diplomat warned that there was a temptation to blame malicious acts on the Russian government before the evidence had been weighed. But the same diplomat noted that Russia had

much to gain from divisions among Iran's rivals in the region, particularly if they made it more difficult for the United States to use Qatar as a major base.

"For sure, this is an attempt at regime change," said Jamal Elshayyal, a senior producer for Al Jazeera, the Qatari-owned news channel that many in the region accuse of spreading extremist ideas.

Pentagon officials said they, too, were taken aback by Mr. Trump's tweets, particularly given the American military's deep ties to Qatar. The military has been eager to avoid political quarrels with the Qataris, a goal reflected in statements by its spokesmen.

"The United States and the coalition are grateful to the Qataris for their longstanding support of our presence and their enduring commitment to regional security," Lt. Col. Damien Pickart, spokesman for the Air Force component of the Central Command, said on Monday.

Al Udeid Air Base, outside the Qatari capital, Doha, is home to more than 11,000 American and coalition service members. Mr. Mattis made a point of visiting in April, spending three nights in Doha, where he met with the emir.

Mr. Trump's tweets also appeared to contradict the American ambassador to Qatar, Dana Shell Smith, who this week retweeted a post of hers saying Qatar had made "real progress" in curbing financial support for terrorists.

On Tuesday, an American diplomat in Doha said that Qatar's relationship with the United States was "strong" and that it had made strides: prosecuting people suspected of funding terrorist groups, freezing assets and putting stringent controls on its banks.

Not for the first time, Mr. Trump's comments differed sharply from those of his top national security aides.

"We certainly would encourage the parties to sit down together and address these differences," Mr. Tillerson told reporters in Sydney, Australia, where he and Mr. Mattis were meeting with officials on Monday.

Mr. Mattis added, "I am positive there will be no implications coming out of this dramatic situation at all."

In addition to hosting the air command center, Qatar is the home of the forward headquarters of the United States Central Command and an American intelligence hub in the Middle East.

It also has deep ties to American academia, providing funding and property to build Middle Eastern campuses for six major universities, including Cornell, Georgetown and Northwestern.

Qatar's financing of radical groups has long been a source of tension with Washington. But the United States has generally avoided taking sides in the regional feuds in the Persian Gulf, because it has strategic partnerships with several countries and most of them, including Saudi Arabia, have a record of financing extremist groups.

"Clearly, the Saudis and the Emiratis felt they had someone in the White House who would take their side," said Robert Malley, who coordinated Middle East policy in the Obama administration. "This puts Qatar in a tough position: Either make a dramatic policy shift or face deeper isolation."

Others analysts were more critical, saying the Saudis had exploited Mr. Trump by seizing on the good will generated during his visit to carry out a long-planned move against a smaller neighbor.

"The Saudis played Donald Trump like a fiddle," said Bruce O. Riedel, a former intelligence analyst who advised Mr. Obama and now works at the Brookings Institution. "He unwittingly encouraged their worst instincts toward their neighbors."

It is not the first time the White House has struggled to explain Mr. Trump's statements about a security partnership. Just last month, during a visit to NATO headquarters in Belgium, he declined to reaffirm America's commitment to the alliance's principle of mutual defense, after a senior administration official had told The New York Times he would.

That line was deleted from Mr. Trump's speech shortly before he delivered it, according to Politico, to the surprise of officials including Mr. Tillerson and Mr. Mattis.

On Tuesday, Mr. Spicer described persistent questions about the episode as "a bit silly," saying Mr. Trump's mere presence at the NATO ceremony was evidence of the American commitment to mutual defense.

Reporting was contributed by David D. Kirkpatrick from Doha, Qatar; Michael R. Gordon, Helene Cooper and David E. Sanger from Washington; Patrick Kingsley from Istanbul; and Sheera Frenkel from San Francisco.

Trump jumps into worsening dispute between Qatar and powerful Arab bloc (UNE)

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009511926129>

9-12 minutes

Trump administration officials said Tuesday that President Trump was not "taking sides" in the deepening dispute among key U.S. counterterrorism partners in the Persian Gulf, despite a morning of presidential Twitter posts congratulating Saudi Arabia — and himself — for cracking down on Qatar for alleged terrorism financing.

"During my recent trip to the Middle East, I stated that there can no longer be funding of Radical Ideology," Trump tweeted. "Leaders pointed to Qatar — look!"

"So good to see the Saudi Arabia visit with the King and 50 countries already paying off," he continued. "They said they would take a hard line on funding extremism, and all reference was pointing to Qatar."

On Monday, several of Qatar's gulf neighbors — Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain — were joined by Egypt and smaller nations in severing diplomatic ties with Qatar, ordering its diplomats and citizens to leave and threatening deeply intertwined regional trade links and air routes.

[The Persian Gulf crisis over Qatar, explained]

The eruption appeared motivated by years-long regional disputes rather than any recent disagreement or action. It followed a late-May visit in which Trump, while calling on the Arab and Muslim worlds to unite against the terrorist threat, heaped praise on Saudi Arabia as the regional leader.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, in New Zealand, called for dialogue among the neighbors. At the State Department, spokeswoman Heather Nauert said that "we recognize that Qatar continues to make efforts to stop the financing of terrorist groups, including prosecuting suspected financiers, freezing assets, introducing stringent controls into its banking system. They have made progress ... but we recognize there is more work to be done."

"Let's move off this social-media thing," Nauert said of numerous questions about Trump's tweets, "because there are a lot of other

important things that we need to discuss."

A senior administration official said: "We're not taking sides. If we are taking sides, we are taking the side of unity and cooperation" against terrorism. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive diplomatic issue.

Nauert and the senior official said the United States had been notified of Saudi Arabia's intention to break relations, shortly before the move was announced Monday. But "I don't think the U.S. government has perfect clarity on what triggered that," the official said. "We know there have been issues between them."

U.S. air base in Qatar

The Pentagon, whose air operations for the Middle East are headquartered at a massive air base in Qatar where at least 10,000 U.S. service members are stationed, opted for balance and calming words.

"We recognize that there are differing views in the region that have gotten us to this point," it said in a statement. "United States and the Coalition are grateful to the Qataris for their longstanding support of our presence and their enduring commitment to regional security. We have no plans to change our posture in Qatar."

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain said they would cut air, sea and land links with Qatar. Four Arab nations lead diplomatic break with Qatar (The Washington Post)

(The Washington Post)

[For Qataris, a U.S. air base is best defense against Trump attacks]

The statement said restrictions that Qatar's gulf neighbors have imposed on Qatari movements in and out of the region "have not impacted our air operations," including missions in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, shook his head in a Capitol hallway when shown Trump's tweets on a reporter's cellphone. "Each of these countries are people that are important to our country," he said. "Our general policy as America has been to work with each of them."

"We do have a base there that we operate out of that's very important," he said of Qatar.

During last month's visit to Saudi Arabia, where he delivered a speech to dozens of leaders from Muslim-majority nations gathered for the occasion, Trump met personally with Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad al-Thani. "We are friends. We've been friends now for a long time. ... Our relationship is extremely good," Trump said at the beginning of the closed-door meeting. "One of the things we will discuss is the [Qatari] purchase of lots of beautiful military equipment."

The senior administration official said that Trump addressed U.S. concerns in private with the Qatari leader.

In New Zealand on Tuesday, Tillerson emphasized that all countries in the gulf region "have their own challenges to live up to that commitment to terminate support for terrorism, extremism, however it manifests itself anywhere in the world. And I would say that's true of all the GCC countries; they have their own work to do in that regard."

The GCC is the Gulf Cooperation Council, whose six members — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar — signed a communique with Trump pledging to continue their joint fight against terrorism. The visit also culminated in what the administration said was \$110 billion in arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

The White House said in a statement Tuesday evening that Trump spoke by phone with Saudi Arabia's King Salman about preventing terrorist financing and "eliminating the promotion of extremism by any nation in the region." Trump, it said, "underscored that a united Gulf Cooperation Council is critical to defeating terrorism and promoting regional stability."

Small but influential Qatar has long been at odds with some of its regional neighbors over its support for the Muslim Brotherhood, which is seen by Saudi Arabia and other nations as a threat to the network of ruling monarchs and others across the region.

Qatar, the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas, also flexed its political influence by using its energy wealth to become a key patron of groups such as Hamas in the Gaza Strip and, in the mid-

1990s, to launch the Al Jazeera media network, which has wide reach through the Arab-speaking world.

U.S. officials who monitor terrorist funding have said that gulf governments have made significant strides in ending official support for terrorist groups, although some money still flows from individuals, primarily in Kuwait and to a lesser extent from Qatar.

Saudi Arabia has come under scrutiny for indirectly backing militant networks through groups promoting the Saudis' strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam.

'Irritation' with Qatar

Gerd Nonneman, a professor of international relations at the Doha campus of Georgetown University, one of a number of U.S. universities with branches in the Qatari capital, said the dispute was fueled by "irritation" in Saudi Arabia and the UAE "with Qatar's independence of mind in foreign policy, including its support for the Arab Spring movements."

Qatar's backing for the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist organizations, Nonneman said in an email, has been driven by "a pragmatic calculation that these movements had considerable social traction and would likely become an important part of the post-Arab Spring era." Qatar, he noted, "also refused to join the campaign to fully isolate Iran ... even while it furiously disagreed with Iran's policies in Syria."

The desire to isolate Iran, in addition to the fight against terrorist groups such as the Islamic State, has brought the Trump administration closer to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The administration has considered designating the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group, although it was dissuaded from immediate action by other Arab leaders, including King Abdullah II in Jordan, one of several countries in which Brotherhood political parties have significant support.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, speaking Tuesday in Paris, mentioned Qatar's support for Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, saying that it "has to choose whether it must move in one direction or the other," according to the Reuters news agency.

In the wake of Monday's events, Kuwait took the lead in trying to

broker a dialogue. The country's emir, Sabah Ahmed al-Sabah, headed to Saudi Arabia for talks with King Salman.

But there were signs that the feud was dividing the region beyond the gulf. Jordan, a close ally of Saudi Arabia, announced that it was downgrading its diplomatic relations with Qatar and canceling the license of the local Al Jazeera office, according to the Foreign Ministry.

Today's WorldView

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL**

Trump Sides With Saudis, Other Gulf States in Rift With Qatar

Felicia Schwartz

7-9 minutes

Updated June 6, 2017 3:43 p.m. ET

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump, by siding with Saudi Arabia and other regional countries in a dispute with Qatar over allegations the emirate supports terrorism, stepped into a dispute among allies and generated confusion about U.S. policy toward the region.

Mr. Trump issued a series of Twitter messages Tuesday following a move by several countries to sever ties with Qatar over accusations that the tiny Persian Gulf country has financed and harbored extremists.

In the messages, Mr. Trump, who visited Saudi Arabia last month on his first international trip as president, appeared to take credit for the rift and said it resulted from his visit, which made cracking down on terror financing a key focus. He wrote that in his meetings with Gulf Arab leaders they cited Qatar as a source of funding for extremism.

He tweeted: "During my recent trip to the Middle East I stated that there can no longer be funding of Radical Ideology. Leaders pointed to Qatar—look!"

Mr. Trump added: "So good to see the Saudi Arabia visit with the King and 50 countries already paying off. They said they would take a hard line on funding extremism, and all reference was pointing to Qatar. Perhaps this will be the beginning of the end to the horror of terrorism!"

Mr. Trump's decision to take sides in a tense diplomatic spat between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and several other Arab countries stands to further inflame tensions in the region, as the move singles out Qatar even though other top administration officials had a day earlier said that diplomacy would smooth over the disagreement.

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

In Turkey, which has tried to mediate the dispute, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned the Saudi-led actions against Qatar. "These developments, coming at a time when we need solidarity and cooperation more than ever, are no good for any country in the region," he said in remarks quoted by the semiofficial Anadolu news agency.

Qatari officials pushed back forcefully at the terrorism

The blowup also holds far-reaching strategic implications because of Qatar's role as a major U.S. military ally. Qatar's Al Udeid air base hosts the U.S. command center that oversees the U.S.-led air war against Islamic State. The base is America's largest military facility in the Middle East.

The uproar also illuminates longstanding U.S. difficulties with Qatar, which Washington has often accused of failing to crack down on the financing militant groups—a criticism also directed at other countries, including Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Trump's tweets contrasted sharply with statements by top aides. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, while visiting Australia on Monday, offered to mediate the dispute and said dialogue was essential. The U.S. ambassador to Qatar, Dana Shell Smith, said in a Twitter message Monday that the emirate has taken positive steps to confront terrorist financing and praised its role in the coalition against Islamic State.

By siding with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain, as well as others, against Qatar, Mr. Trump may have sowed uncertainty about U.S. expectations.

"I think people are confused. What exactly is the U.S. position?" said Marcelle Wahba, a former ambassador to the United Arab Emirates who is now president of the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington. "Are we telling the Qataris that you have to compromise and come through with what the Saudis are asking you to do?"

A main concern for Washington is the continued operation of the U.S.-run Combined Air Operations Command, its base in Qatar. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Tuesday held a previously scheduled phone call with his counterpart in Qatar, said Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis.

accusations and portrayed themselves as victims of a Saudi-led conspiracy. In a letter to U.N. Secretary General António Guterres, Qatar's U.N. ambassador, Alya Ahmed al-Thani, said her country had been "a target of campaigns of fabricated accusations" and a "hidden agenda to cause harm to our country."

She referred to recently leaked emails allegedly written to the UAE's ambassador to the United States, Yousef al-Otaiba, which

appear to show Otaiba trying to garner support in Washington for an anti-Qatar coalition.

Fahim reported from Istanbul and Raghavan from Cairo. Mike DeBonis in Washington contributed to this report.

"We continue to have our base there and the base continues its operations," Capt. Davis said, adding that there had been no interruptions to U.S. operations in Qatar. "It's still a place where we launch our operations into Iraq and Syria."

While Qatar is unlikely to retaliate by closing the base or ordering U.S. forces out, there could be other consequences.

"My assumption is that the United States...has some confidence that it will not be shut out of Al Udeid," said Jon Alterman, vice president of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "But Qatar can certainly make it less convenient to use the base, and the president's tweets give them reason to flex their muscles and remind the United States just how convenient the base has been for the last 15 years."

Mr. Trump spoke later Tuesday with Saudi Arabia's King Salman.

The White House, explaining Mr. Trump's messages, said the president intended to press the issue of terrorism financing.

"His message of toughness on terror finance and extremism is being heeded by countries in the region," Mr. Spicer said.

A senior administration official added later: "There is a belief among the Gulf states and within the United States that Qatar has been the least helpful in fighting terrorism financing."

However, the diplomatic rupture threatens the cohesion of a group of countries Mr. Trump has been seeking to unite around the dual goals of combating extremists and countering growing Iranian influence across the region. That alliance was designed to include Israel, bringing a diverse array of interests to both missions.

State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said the U.A.E. informed the U.S. of the decision to

break ties with Qatar shortly before it happened.

The issue was the subject of previously unreported discussions during Mr. Trump's trip to Saudi Arabia in May. Mr. Trump said he discussed the concerns about Qatar with Gulf leaders, and the White House said he met afterward with Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani.

During that meeting, Mr. Trump was "very heartened by the emir's commitment to formally joining the terrorist financing targeting center and showing their commitment to this issue," Mr. Spicer said Tuesday.

Qatar's foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, told the BBC that Mr. Trump at the meeting raised U.S. concerns about Qatar's funding of terrorist groups.

"We told him very clearly: If there is any allegation, we can sit [around] the table and we can sort it out." Mr. Thani added that those making charges against Qatar "based their information on media reports."

Backers of a U.S. alliance with Qatar say the emirate is crucial to the fight against Islamic State, and Qatar's Sunni Muslim monarchy has used its vast oil and gas resources to build a reputation as the region's top mediator in conflicts ranging from Sudan to Lebanon.

Qatar also has given financial or diplomatic support to Mideast rebel groups, including some that have ties to al Qaeda. And it has riled some of its Sunni allies by adopting a more neutral stance toward Shiite-majority Iran.

Tensions among the Arab countries rose late last month when Qatar's official news agency posted comments, purportedly by its emir, that praised Iran, which led Saudi Arabia and others in the region to block websites of Qatari news outlets. Qatar said the news agency

had been hacked and denied the emir had made the comments.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is aiding Qatar in the alleged hack, a U.S. national

security official said.

—Sharon Nunn and Gordon Lubold in Washington contributed to this article.

Write to Felicia Schwartz at Felicia.Schwartz@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as "Trump Sides With

Saudis, Gulf States in Qatar Dispute.'



Editorial : Trump's stunning response to the Middle East diplomatic crisis

The Post's View

Opinion

Opinion A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

June 6 at 7:39 PM

SAUDIA ARABIA and other autocratic Sunni states have been at odds for years with the energy-rich emirate of Qatar, which hosts the largest U.S. air base in the Middle East. The explosion of those tensions into a diplomatic crisis this week threatens vital U.S. interests in the region, including the military campaign against the Islamic State. So it's stunning, though perhaps not surprising, that President Trump is claiming credit for the blow-up.

Once again pulling the rug out from under his national security team, Mr. Trump on Tuesday tweeted that the diplomatic and economic boycott imposed on Qatar Monday by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt was the result of his "visit with the [Saudi] King ... already paying

off." When he spoke there against "funding of Radical Ideology," the president wrote, "Leaders pointed to Qatar." Apparently Mr. Trump swallowed their cynical accusations without question: "Perhaps," he tweeted, the Qatar boycott "will be the beginning of the end to the horror of terrorism."

Where to start? Mr. Trump's intervention aligned the United States against a country that is currently hosting at least 10,000 U.S. military personnel at a base where operations against the Islamic State are being directed — a facility that was needed after Saudi Arabia ordered U.S. forces to leave its territory. In backing the Saudis, the president offered unconditional support for a country that has fostered the spread of Islamist extremism across the world and that has supplied many of the foot soldiers for the Islamic State and al-Qaeda — not to mention most of the 9/11 hijackers. He mixed the United States into a Middle Eastern feud that it should be trying to defuse — which is what the professionals at the State Department and Pentagon were

trying to do before their boss jumped in.

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In reality, neither side in this battle among dictatorships deserves full U.S. support. Qatar stands accused of cutting dirty deals with Iran and aiding al-Qaeda-linked rebel groups in Syria. But what really incenses its Sunni neighbors is its support for popular Islamist political movements such as Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, which pursued and won power by democratic means before being ousted in a bloody military coup. Qatar's policy of keeping open relations with Iran while opposing Iranian aggression in Yemen and Syria was also U.S. policy until five months ago. It recognizes that the uncompromising sectarian conflict promoted by Saudi Arabia will never bring stability to the region.

The demands advanced by the Saudi coalition against their neighbor hardly seem to match U.S. priorities. They reportedly include

the shutdown of media outlets such as Al Jazeera that have provided channels for dissident political views in the region, including supporters of democracy and human rights. Qatar is being told it must expel not just political representatives of Palestinian Hamas, who used Doha as a base for negotiations with the rival Fatah movement, but also Muslim Brotherhood figures fleeing Egypt's bloody repression.

If successful in this showdown, the Middle East's most reactionary rulers will have taken another step toward shutting down domestic political alternatives, whether moderate Islamists or liberal democrats, and blocking the rapprochement with Iran that ultimately will be needed to end the region's wars. Worst, they will have succeeded with the help of a U.S. president who seems not to comprehend American interests, nor how he is damaging them.



Editorial : What can bind the Middle East

The Christian Science Monitor

3 minutes

June 6, 2017 —Yet another crisis has struck the Middle East. Four Arab states led by Saudi Arabia have cut ties with Qatar over accusation the tiny Gulf kingdom supports terrorism. The intra-Arab rift comes on top of four armed conflicts in the region, ongoing tensions over Israel and Iran, and struggles against terrorist groups. As these problems pile up, the Middle East is in need of a country that can be a calm center, perhaps even a model and mediator.

Outside powers, such as the United States, often fail in that role. And

while young people in the region increasingly seek peace and liberty, their voices are still largely stifled by their rulers. The one Middle East country that has a history of acting as a neutral arbiter with a message of peaceful coexistence is Oman.

This small country, ruled for decades by Sultan Qaboos bin Said al-Said, certainly has strategic interests to act as a middle man. It borders Saudi Arabia and lies just 35 miles across the Strait of Hormuz from Iran. With much less petroleum wealth than its neighbors, it must welcome trade and ties with countries that are often at odds with one another.

Because of an independent foreign policy, Oman has hosted an Israeli prime minister, helped bring the US

and Iran together for talks, and sought peace in the current war in Yemen. It carefully chooses sides, if at all, in Middle East disputes. With this latest crisis between Qatar and other member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Oman could play a pivotal role.

Since the 1990s, Oman has been home to a desalination research center that brings Israelis and Arabs together. Its women enjoy more opportunities and freedom than in most other Muslim countries. And no Omani has been convicted of a terrorist crime.

Yet beyond national interests, Oman practices peacemaking because of its dominant brand of Islam called Ibadhi, which straddles the region's religious divide

between the Sunni and Shiite branches. Ibadhi Islam teaches unity and inclusivity among Muslims. In Oman, where the regime controls Islamic institutions, other religions enjoy far more freedom than in neighboring states. Its government is largely nondemocratic yet its society is relatively egalitarian.

All these characteristics have given it respect as a mediator, or at least neutral territory for adversaries to talk. In a region known for its violence and export of terror, such a country should be honored and supported for its ability to see beyond conflicts and to balance interests, opening the possibilities for peace.



Trump May Rue His Middle Finger to Europe

Paul McLeary | 1 hour ago

7-8 minutes

As a reformed unilateralist, I can understand the frisson of excitement that President Donald Trump and his supporters are experiencing after having thumbed

their noses — or, perhaps more accurately, lifted their middle fingers — at the rest of the world by exiting the Paris climate accords.

In fact, annoying our allies, the Europeans in particular, seemed to be a big part of the calculus behind Trump's decision to leave the voluntary, nonbinding agreement.

He could have easily stayed in, as recommended by Ohio's Gov. John Kasich, and simply adjusted the U.S. implementation plan to be less strict than the one favored by President Barack Obama. But no. He wanted to send a defiant message of unilateralism — of America First and screw the rest of you. The *Washington Post* even reports: "One senior White House official characterized disappointing European allies as 'a secondary benefit' of Trump's decision to withdraw."

I can sympathize, having written the following words about France in 2003, when that country was resisting the George W. Bush administration's plans to invade Iraq: "It would take a psychoanalyst of Freud's eminence fully to deconstruct the farrago of delusions, resentments and neuroses that guide French policy on Iraq." I was hardly alone or even the worst sufferer from this American superiority syndrome in those heady days after the swift and unexpected downfall of the Taliban. The French were widely reviled as "cheese-eating surrender monkeys" and french fries were being renamed "freedom fries."

It's easy to fall prey to all the cheap stereotypes about the supposedly effete, ineffectual Europeans and the French in particular.

It's easy to fall prey to all the cheap stereotypes about the supposedly effete, ineffectual Europeans and the French in particular. Hence Trump's boast that "I was elected to represent Pittsburgh, not Paris." Pittsburgh voted overwhelmingly for Hillary Clinton and its mayor supports the Paris agreement, but never mind — it's a sound bite that

plays into deeply rooted American prejudices.

Ever since our founding, there has been a tendency among Americans to think that we are morally pure — "a shining city on a hill" — compared with the sordid Old World from which most of us came. Our collective sense of superiority grew in the 20th century, when we had to rescue Europeans twice from the threat of German aggression — and then stick around to protect them from Russian aggression.

It's easy to think we have nothing to learn from our junior partners in the Western alliance, and even to disdain that alliance altogether, as Trump did by refusing to affirm NATO's Article 5 on his trip to Europe. For good measure, the president lashed out at the mayor of London following Saturday night's terrorist attack, tweeting: "At least 7 dead and 48 wounded in terror attack and Mayor of London says there is 'no reason to be alarmed!'" (In fact, Mayor Sadiq Khan had said there was no reason to be alarmed about a heightened police presence — not about the threat of terrorism.) No matter, Trump doubled down and attacked Khan again the following day.

The temptation to say "to hell with you" can be particularly alluring because Europeans can still display condescension toward Americans, particularly of the unsophisticated variety.

The temptation to say "to hell with you" can be particularly alluring because Europeans can still display condescension toward Americans, particularly of the unsophisticated variety. Trump, with his Brobdingnagian inferiority complex and his insatiable appetite for approbation, must feel this keenly.

Little wonder that he prefers the autocratic Saudis to the democratic Europeans: the former kowtow to him, while the latter look down on him — and he knows it. Trump's vendetta against Khan dates back to last year, when the London mayor upbraided him for his "ignorant views about Islam." That's precisely the kind of insult that the ignorant president can't stand.

But here's the thing. Americans aren't always right, and Europeans aren't always wrong. Supporters of the Iraq War, like me, should have listened more to Europeans' well-founded concerns about the unforeseen consequences of toppling Saddam Hussein. Likewise, the Lyndon Johnson administration should have listened to European opposition before embarking on a misbegotten war in Vietnam, which not even the British backed. Today, the Trump administration is making a mistake by ignoring European, indeed global, support for the Paris agreement. It won't end global warming — a genuine problem, not a Chinese hoax as Trump seems to imagine — but it will make a significant start without handcuffing any of the participants to rigid emissions quotas.

While the United States is a great and powerful country, we are much stronger when we work together with a European Union, which has a population bigger than ours (508 million versus 321 million) and a collective gross domestic product nearly as large (\$16.5 trillion versus \$17.9 trillion). The Europeans, to be sure, are often so disunited and lacking in military capabilities that they need American leadership — as, for example, in the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in the 1980s or the intervention in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. But

they bring a lot to the table, too, not least a sophisticated outlook on the world that is rooted in common Western ideals but that often leads them to different conclusions.

In our system of government we recognize that no one individual — not even the president — has all the answers. That's why presidential authority is carefully circumscribed by checks and balances. But those limitations are less evident in foreign policy. The commander in chief can exercise nearly unbounded discretion to initiate hostilities or to pull out of an international agreement if, like the Paris accords, it hasn't been ratified by the Senate.

There are, nevertheless, good reasons why presidents should try to win international support for their actions. It's not only because we need help from other countries, although we do. It's also because there can be greater wisdom in the international community than that possessed by the president and his insular coterie of advisors.

That's not to say that the United States is always wrong to act alone — sometimes it may be necessary. But in general if Washington is acting in ways that the entire world, and our closest allies in particular, regard as wrongheaded, we should pause and reconsider. Maybe, just maybe, we are wrong and they are right. That's a lesson I learned the hard way after 2003. Trump and his supporters may someday learn the same lesson if his pullback from global leadership allows the Chinese, Russians, and other rivals to fill the vacuum we are leaving behind.

Photo credit: DAN KITWOOD/Getty Images



Burns: Donald Trump is wrecking America's 70-year alliance with Europe

Nicholas Burns, Opinion contributor
7-8 minutes

President Donald Trump is expected to make a key endorsement at a NATO summit Thursday. Video provided by Newsy Newslook

President Trump attends the NATO summit in Brussels in May 2017. (Photo: Matt Dunham, AFP/Getty Images)

The 70th anniversary of the Marshall Plan this week should be a celebration of the trans-Atlantic alliance — the most powerful and successful in modern history.

Secretary of State George Marshall's speech at the Harvard commencement on June 5, 1947, set in motion the historic U.S. aid program to revive Europe's shattered economies. It also set the stage for the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Common Market and eventually the European Union.

Instead of celebrating, however, America and Europe are experiencing their most significant crisis in decades. President Trump's recent visit to NATO and the EU was the least successful of any U.S. president in seven decades, exposing deep ideological divisions and a widening gulf of trust across the Atlantic. Last weekend's terrorist

attacks in London had the same effect. Trump repeatedly criticized London Mayor Sadiq Khan for telling citizens not to be alarmed by the attacks, when Khan actually said they should not be alarmed by a heavy police presence. Trump's tweets did not go down well in stoic Britain, where the World War II maxim, "keep calm and carry on," still holds.

The policy differences alone are profound. European leaders want a historic free trade agreement with America, but Trump's nationalist economic strategy led him to reject it. German Chancellor Angela Merkel is determined to maintain tough EU and U.S. sanctions on Russia over its occupation of

Ukraine. Trump appears more interested in a rapprochement with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The chasm is deepest and most emotional on climate change. Trump's announcement that America will pull out of the historic 2015 Paris Agreement is deepening distrust among European citizens and their governments, which consider it an urgent priority.

When I served as U.S. ambassador to NATO, America had a bruising argument with France and Germany over the Iraq War in 2003. We buried the hatchet eventually by joining forces in Afghanistan and negotiating a nuclear deal with Iran. We knew the NATO alliance

was worth preserving. Trump has downplayed the importance of those longstanding ties — according to *Politico*, even to the point of removing from his prepared speech an affirmation of NATO's Article 5, the commitment by member nations to defend one another.

That is why the current crisis is far more threatening to the long-term future of the alliance than past disagreements. Trump's ambivalence about NATO and skepticism about the EU are seen by European leaders as an open break with 70 years of U.S. commitment to the continent.

The heart of the problem is Trump's view of Europe, and Germany in particular, as an economic competitor rather than a strategic partner. This is a sea change in American attitudes towards Europe. All of Trump's predecessors dating to President Truman have prized Europe's political and military alliance with America. Trump's boorish behavior in Brussels and his intemperate tweets criticizing Merkel (and now Khan) have only reinforced the doubts about him in Europe.

If Trump sticks to this course, there will be real costs for the United States. Europe remains our leading trade partner and the most important investor in the U.S. economy. The 27 European members of NATO remain the largest group of U.S. allies in the world. On nearly every important U.S. global priority, Europe is a key partner. We need the United Kingdom, France and Germany to persuade Iran to adhere to the 2015 nuclear deal. Trump may soon ask Europe to contribute additional troops to NATO's Afghan mission. The U.S. fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria will be seriously undermined without British and French support. America needs NATO allies to hold the line against Putin's territorial ambitions in Eastern Europe.

All this argues for a White House reassessment of its dramatic distancing from Europe. Trump was right to strengthen ties with Saudi Arabia and the other Persian Gulf States on his first foreign trip. But our alliance with Europe is far more important to us. In contrast to Arab authoritarian leaders, we share with Europe a commitment to democracy, the rule of law and

human rights. Despite their persistent, public spin to the contrary, the more experienced White House hands have to realize the magnitude of the problem Trump has created.

POLICING THE USA: A look at race, justice, media

To be fair, Europe can do more to meet its own obligations to America. Trump is right to ask the allies to step more resolutely into the fight against ISIS. He has the American public behind him in asking Germany and the European nations to increase defense spending. All modern U.S. presidents have insisted NATO's European members should meet the alliance defense spending standard of 2% of gross domestic product.

But Trump's bull-in-a-china-shop approach has backfired. He would do better to push the allies in private but acknowledge publicly that the majority of them actually increased defense spending after Putin's annexation of Crimea in 2014. All, including Germany, have pledged to reach the 2% target by 2024. Pushing on this open door would have been more effective

than lecturing leaders such as Merkel in an election year.

The creation of NATO and support for European unity remain among America's greatest foreign policy achievements. At a time of Russian assertiveness in Eastern Europe and dangerous instability in the Middle East, America needs its European allies in NATO more than ever.

That is why cooler heads in the administration must steer the impulsive, inexperienced Trump back to an effective relationship with NATO and the EU. Without such a sharp recalibration over the coming months, Trump's bumbling Europe strategy could turn out to be one of the most significant U.S. foreign policy failures of the post-World War II era.

Nicholas Burns is a Harvard professor and former under secretary of State who served presidents of both parties in his foreign service career. He was U.S. ambassador to NATO from 2001 to 2005. Follow him on Twitter: @RNicholasBurns

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Top U.S. Diplomat in China Quits Over Withdrawal From Paris Climate Accord

Josh Chin, Te-Ping Chen and Brian Spegele

7-8 minutes

Updated June 6, 2017 2:10 p.m. ET

BEIJING—The top-ranking U.S. diplomat in Beijing resigned over President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris climate accord, depleting already thinned-out State Department ranks and depriving Washington of one of its most experienced China hands.

David Rank, a 27-year veteran of the State Department, has been running the embassy in Beijing as chargé d'affaires since January. He had been expected to continue in that role until Mr. Trump's pick for ambassador, former Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, arrives. Mr. Branstad has been confirmed for his post but is undergoing ambassador training.

Mr. Rank, who couldn't be reached for comment, announced his resignation at a town hall for embassy staff on Monday. He said his conscience prevented him from carrying out his duties after Mr. Trump's decision on the climate-change agreement, according to people who were at the meeting.

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry arrived in Beijing this week to attend an international gathering on clean energy and meet with Chinese officials. It would have been Mr. Rank's job to accompany Mr. Perry to those meetings and help explain the Trump administration's decision to exit from the Paris agreement.

U.S. divisions over energy policy played out against the backdrop of Mr. Perry's visit as another visitor, California Gov. Jerry Brown, was received at the Great Hall of the People by President Xi Jinping. The Chinese Foreign Ministry described Mr. Xi as telling Mr. Brown he valued local-level cooperation with the U.S.

"It was very clear that he welcomes an increased role on the part of California" to fight climate change, Mr. Brown told reporters.

Mr. Perry wasn't expected to meet Mr. Xi this week.

Mr. Rank's resignation comes as the Trump administration relies less on experienced career diplomats in its dealings with Asia. A diminished role for the State Department and its embassies has left foreign policy for the region in the hands of a few of the president's advisers, including Jared Kushner, his son-in-law.

The U.S. Embassy in Tokyo has been without an ambassador since Caroline Kennedy departed after the November election. Mr. Trump's nominee for U.S. ambassador to Japan, businessman William Hagerty, has yet to be confirmed by the Senate. Mr. Trump, meanwhile, has met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe twice since his election and several top U.S. officials have visited Japan.

The U.S. also hasn't had an ambassador in South Korea following the U.S. election, complicating diplomatic efforts during a crisis over North Korea's nuclear program and as a new government settles into office in Seoul. A candidate for U.S. ambassador to South Korea hasn't been named.

Career foreign service officers at the embassy in Beijing said they were largely kept out of the loop when U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson visited China in March.

Permanent candidates for scores of senior positions at the State Department, including that of assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, remain vacant.

"Dave Rank is the best America has to offer," said Scott Mulhauser, a former embassy chief of staff in

Beijing. "There is a reason he's received ever-tougher postings from presidents and secretaries on all sides of the political spectrum."

The U.S.-China relationship deteriorated after Mr. Trump's surprise indication in January that he might recognize Taiwan diplomatically. Relations have improved since Mr. Trump agreed to abide by the decades-old "One China" policy and met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Florida in April. But tensions still remain.

Washington is eager to get Beijing's help in dealing with North Korea's advancing nuclear-weapons program, while at the same time pushing back against China's vast territorial claims in the South China Sea.

The relationship also faces pressure from a "100-day plan" to significantly reduce the U.S. trade deficit with China that Messrs. Xi and Trump agreed to in Florida.

Cooperation on climate change was a rare bright spot in relations between China and the U.S. under the Obama administration, one that diplomats on both sides have said they worked for years to achieve. At the clean-energy gathering in Beijing on Tuesday, Mr. Brown, who criticized Mr. Trump's move, agreed

on separate climate goals between his state and China's Ministry of Science and Technology.

On a panel at the same gathering, Mr. Perry stressed his department's support of cleaner coal technologies to balance environmental protection and economic growth. "We can and we will be good stewards of both," he said. Mr. Perry declined to answer reporters' questions.

China's Foreign Ministry declined to comment on Mr. Rank's resignation at a regular press briefing on Tuesday, saying it was an internal U.S. matter. China would continue to work with the U.S. on a range of issues, ministry spokeswoman Hua

Chunying said, "including cooperation in the climate-change field."

"Mr. Rank made a personal decision. We appreciate his years of dedicated service to the State Department," said spokeswoman Anna Richey-Allen.

Mr. Rank has been replaced as acting head of mission by economic counselor Jonathan Fritz, a spokeswoman for the U.S. embassy said. Mr. Rank's departure was first reported on Twitter by John Pomfret, a former Washington Post reporter who now works for China news startup SupChina.

Mr. Fritz couldn't be reached for comment.

Mr. Rank was posted to China several times over the years. Before returning to Beijing in 2016, he ran the State Department's Office of Afghanistan Affairs. He is fluent in Mandarin and speaks French, Dari and Greek, according to his biography on the State Department website.

One person who was present at the meeting on Monday said Mr. Rank was widely admired by embassy staffers.

On the Facebook page of Mr. Rank's wife, Mary Randall Rank, a posting by one of the couple's

daughters, Maggie Rank, paid tribute to her father's career: "He can make jokes in 5 different languages, but more importantly, he knows how to listen. He understands what facts are. He sees the bigger picture."

—Jeremy Page and Alastair Gale contributed to this article.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

China Is the World's Worst Polluter. Don't Expect It to Be a Climate Crusader

Andrew Browne

8-10 minutes

June 6, 2017 5:30 a.m. ET

BEIJING—For years, a wide spectrum of groups in the U.S. lectured, cajoled and entreated China to go green.

Multinationals and nonprofits teamed up with Chinese environmental groups to promote eco-friendly causes; Coca-Cola restored forests in the upper Yangtze. U.S. labs offered scientific support. Academics collaborated on research. The former Treasury secretary, Hank Paulson, championed China's disappearing wetlands, a haven for migratory birds.

The well-funded effort amplified voices within China demanding the government take action. It was, says Orville Schell, a longtime China watcher and environmentalist, "the most effective missionary work in the past couple hundred years."

So it's an irony of historic proportions how the roles have reversed: China, the world's worst polluter by far, is now a convert on climate change while the White House under Donald Trump has turned apostate.

In pulling out of the 2015 Paris climate-change agreement, Mr. Trump has repudiated a signal accomplishment of the Obama presidency: persuading Beijing to become a partner in the effort to prevent the planet from heating up to the point of no return. Without

China's support, the Paris deal might have fallen apart.

Mr. Paulson issued a statement saying he was dismayed and disappointed. "We have left a void for others to fill," he said.

Can China step in?

When it comes to the environment, China is still torn by conflicting priorities. It has installed more solar and wind capacity than any other nation—and plans to invest another \$360 billion in renewable energy between now and 2020.

The economy is rebalancing away from heavy industry and manufacturing toward much cleaner services and consumption.

Coal consumption has declined for three straight years. On current trends, many scientists expect that China will reach peak carbon emissions well before its target date of 2030 under the Paris accord.

Yet Beijing remains committed to rapid growth. And coal is still king.

Just ask the residents of Beijing. Whenever economic policy makers set out to boost growth, spending flows to new real-estate and infrastructure projects, the steel mills around the capital fire up their coal furnaces—and commuters reach for their face masks.

This winter was particularly hard on the lungs. A spending splurge meant that Beijing's average pollution levels last year were double the national standard set by the State Council.

America's absence from the Paris accord weakens the global fight against climate change, while

strengthening China's position in clean technologies of the future. No doubt, the Chinese heavy-industry lobby—dominated by state enterprises and their growth-hungry local government sponsors—will put pressure on the government to relax green targets. But Beijing seems eager to seize the moral high ground. President Xi Jinping has vowed to "protect" the climate-change agreement.

Li Shuo, a climate and green-energy campaigner for Greenpeace East Asia, thinks that "China will just carry on" with its cleanup measures. In his judgment, it's not a question of whether Chinese leaders will take the U.S. withdrawal as an excuse to backslide but "how far they will overachieve."

By 2020, every Chinese coal-fired power station will be required to achieve an efficiency standard so high that not a single U.S. plant could meet it today, according to a report by the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank.

Meanwhile, Mr. Trump has scrapped the Obama-era Clean Power Plan to curb power plant emissions.

The divergence on climate change represents a remarkable moment. For much of the past four decades China has pursued go-for-broke industrialization, heedless of the cost in human health. U.S. critics who lamented the damage to the planet often were told off for their imperialist attitudes. One commentator compared Western pressure on poor countries over climate change to the "guns, cannons and warships" of a previous era.

Then Beijing's political calculus shifted. Urban residents rebelled at the smog, and when protests threatened social stability the government began to embrace a green agenda.

That said, among Communist Party leaders the fear of environmental protests is matched by apprehension about the consequences of slower, more planet-friendly development. They have staked their credibility on China catching up to, and overtaking, America.

President Xi proclaims "supply-side reform," by which he means shutting down overcapacity in heavily polluting state industries.

On the other hand, his monumentally ambitious Silk Road plan to build trading infrastructure from Asia to Europe via the Middle East and Africa will prolong the life of some of the heaviest emitters making steel, glass, aluminum and cement—and export the country's carbon problem.

Much of the \$62 billion that China has pledged to invest in Pakistan is for relatively inefficient coal-fired power plants.

China may be going green, but it's not there yet. On the environment as in trade, another area where Mr. Trump seems determined to abandon America's global leadership, don't look to China to supply the crusading zeal.

Write to Andrew Browne at andrew.browne@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as 'Don't Count on China as the World's Next Climate Crusader.'

Javier C. Hernández and Adam Nagourney

8-10 minutes

BEIJING — Gov. Jerry Brown of California should be fading quietly into the final days of his career. After 40 years in public life, Mr. Brown, 79, a Democrat, is in the final stretch as the state's chief executive. He has been talking about the Colusa County family ranch where he wants to retire. And a battery of younger politicians is already battling to succeed him.

But instead, Mr. Brown was in China on Tuesday, emerging as a de facto envoy from the United States on climate change at a time when President Trump has renounced efforts to battle global emissions. In a meeting packed with symbolism — and one that seemed at once to elevate the California governor and rebuke Mr. Trump — President Xi Jinping of China met with Mr. Brown, at the governor's request, at the very moment China prepares to take a more commanding role in fighting climate change.

"California's leading, China's leading," Mr. Brown said at a wide-ranging and at times feisty news conference after he met with Mr. Xi. "It's true I didn't come to Washington, I came to Beijing. Well, someday I'm going to go to Washington, but not this week."

Mr. Brown has long used his platform as governor to advocate emission reduction policies, both in his state and globally. But the decision by Mr. Trump to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement, on the eve of Mr. Brown's trip here, gave an already planned visit new visibility.

The son of a governor, Mr. Brown has been in public office — or running for public office — nearly every year since he was elected secretary of state in 1970. This is the second time he has served as governor. He ran for president three times. He has been mayor of Oakland, the chairman of the California Democratic Party and the state's attorney general.

But the election of Mr. Trump, and his decision to pull out of the climate accord last week, suggests that Mr. Brown's likely final act in public life is going to be much different than he ever imagined. Instead of

fighting, to name one example, for the high-speed rail line between Los Angeles and San Francisco that has been his mission for more than five years — or guarding against what he sees as financial excesses by the state Legislature as it adopts its next budget — Mr. Brown, with 18 months left in office, has stepped into a void left by Mr. Trump.

In so doing, he has moved way beyond the stage of Sacramento, embracing an issue that he has been identified with since he first ran for governor and in a state that is known for championing environmental causes.

"I'm more energized and activated than ever," Mr. Brown said, as he finished the third day of his trip. "And I think that we're actually making more progress."

Still, California's confrontations with the Trump administration on climate change are risky: The state has been wary that the Environmental Protection Agency may move to revoke a waiver permitting California to set fuel economy standards that exceed federal requirements. That waiver, which has been central to the state's success at reducing emissions, was issued when Richard M. Nixon was president. If it were revoked, the state would be forced to lower its strict fuel economy standards and it would be less able to influence national environmental policy.

And Mr. Brown, as a state leader, cannot command the leverage of a global leader in any United Nations negotiations on the future of the Paris accord.

"You can't stop a state from doing what they want to do in this area," said Thomas Pyle, a former lobbyist for Koch Industries who worked for Mr. Trump's transition team and serves as president of the Institute for Energy Research, a pro fossil-fuel research organization. "They can flex their muscles but they can't represent the U.S."

Some national Republicans were fairly dismissive of Mr. Brown's appearance. "I hope that Governor Brown gets as good a deal for California as China got from the Paris climate agreement," Senator John Barrasso of Wyoming, the chairman of the Senate Environment Committee, said in a reference to some Republicans' views that China got the better end of the Paris deal.

For Mr. Xi, Mr. Brown's visit could not have been better timed — allowing him to act on declarations that China would now become a global leader on climate change.

It is unusual for a Chinese president to meet with an American governor in such a formal setting in Beijing. Mr. Xi's session with Mr. Brown was covered extensively by the government-controlled news media. The state broadcaster featured it as the second story on the evening news, after a segment on China's ambitions in outer space, an indication of the meeting's importance to the ruling Communist Party.

At such a volatile moment in Washington, the meeting allowed Mr. Xi to focus on the common ground China shares with some American politicians. China has historically maintained relationships with leaders of parties not in power as a practical matter, in the West and in places like Myanmar and Taiwan.

Gary Locke, a former American ambassador to China and governor of Washington, said Chinese leaders were "well aware" that Mr. Brown was considered a "strong leader" on climate change and a critic of Mr. Trump.

Analysts said that Mr. Xi might have also wanted to show Mr. Trump that China was willing to work around him by strengthening ties with allies like Europe, India and California. Mr. Brown's endorsement may also serve as a buffer against critics who say that China is moving too slowly to curb emissions.

"He wants to retain the positive — if oversold — image China earned by stepping up to the plate alongside the United States," said Elizabeth C. Economy, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Chinese accounts of the meeting did not mention the Paris accord or Mr. Trump. Mr. Brown said Mr. Xi never criticized the American president.

Mr. Brown, who was attending an energy conference in Beijing, arrived just days before David H. Rank, the chargé d'affaires of the American Embassy in Beijing, resigned in protest of the president's decision on the Paris agreement. Rick Perry, the energy secretary, was here as well for the energy conference, though he apparently did not meet with Mr. Xi.

Mr. Xi met with Mr. Brown in an ornate room in the Great Hall of the People where he often meets visiting foreign leaders. In their 45-minute conversation, Mr. Xi was joined by his top foreign policy officials as he discussed with Mr. Brown efforts to reduce carbon emissions and promote alternative energy. As a gift, Mr. Brown gave Mr. Xi a first-edition copy of "The Mountains of California," a 1894 book by John Muir, a naturalist who wrote extensively about the splendors of the California wilderness.

"I would say that the California-China collaboration has taken a real leap forward," Mr. Brown said as he recounted the meeting for reporters.

Mr. Brown has spent the past several days traveling around China to meet with officials about efforts to reduce carbon emissions and promote green technologies. He signed agreements on clean energy technological development with officials in the southwestern province of Sichuan and the eastern province of Jiangsu.

California operates a cap-and-trade market, allowing companies to buy and sell greenhouse gas emission allowances, making it more costly for companies to emit at high levels. China plans to start a national emissions trading plan by the end of the year.

Mr. Brown and other Democratic leaders of California have made clear that they would push ahead on the state's leading-edge efforts to reduce all emissions no matter what happens in Washington.

Mr. Brown, clearly relishing the attention he was drawing to the state, said the lesson California had learned as it imposed limits on emissions was that it did not interfere with economic growth or cause hardship.

"Sacrifice is not a term that is that popular these days," he said. "I think happy-time news is what people like from their politicians, even if the news can be a little more dire than that."

"I don't think we're going to have to put on a hair shirt and eat bean sprouts," Mr. Brown said. "I think we can have quite a rich life, but we're going to have to get going and make the transition."

**The
New York
Times**

6-7 minutes

Friedman: Trump Lies. China Thrives.

Thomas L.
Friedman

"America has been dreaming of becoming a cashless society," Ya-

Qin Zhang, president of Baidu, China's main search engine, remarked to me, "but China is already there." It has "leapfrogged

the rest of world" and is now going mobile-first in everything.

Construction is going strong in Beijing. Greg Baker/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

Wang Xing, the founder of Meituan.com — a Chinese mobile website that is a combination of Fandango, Yelp, OpenTable, Grubhub, TripAdvisor, Booking.com and Angie's List — told me that he has around 300,000 people on electric bicycles who deliver takeout food and groceries to 10 million Chinese mobile internet users daily. "We are the largest food delivery company in the world," said Xing.

And in an age when raw data from the internet of people and the internet of things is the new oil, the fact that China has 700 million people doing so many transactions daily on the mobile internet means it's piling up massive amounts of information that can be harvested to identify trends and spur new artificial intelligence applications.

Moreover, while Trump is pulling out of the Paris climate deal, China is steadily pulling out of coal. Xin Guo, C.E.O. of Career International, told me two of his hottest job openings in China are in "software and new energy" — everyone is looking for engineers for electric cars, solar and wind. Walter Fang, a top executive at iSoftStone, which helps design China's smart, sustainable cities, told me that "just two weeks ago I brought in about a dozen green energy start-up companies from Massachusetts" to show them

opportunities in China.

And yet, as smart as China has been in adopting new technologies, Trump's broad complaint that China is not playing fair on trade and has grown in some areas at the expense of U.S. and European workers has merit and needs to be addressed — now. Before going to Beijing I emailed the smartest person I know inside China on trade (who will have to go nameless) and asked if Trump had a point.

He answered: "Your note has arrived as I slide across the Chinese countryside at 300 kilometers per hour from Beijing to Shanghai. There are nearly 60 trains going from Beijing to Shanghai every day, typically with 16 cars able to carry nearly 1,300 people. ... We glide past endless brand-new factories and immaculate apartment buildings in practically every city along the way, with many more still under construction. As you suspect, I have been sympathetic to many of Trump's trade and industrial policy ideas. But if anything, Trump may be too late."

Ouch.

The core problem, U.S. and European business leaders based in China explained, is that when the U.S. allowed China to join the World Trade Organization in 2001 and gain much less restricted access to our markets, we gave China the right to keep protecting parts of its

market — because it was a "developing economy." The assumption was that as China reformed and became more of our equal, its trade barriers and government aid to Chinese companies would melt away.

They did not. China grew in strength, became America's equal in many fields and continued to protect its own companies from foreign competition, either by limiting access or demanding that foreign companies take on a Chinese partner and transfer their intellectual property to China as the price of access, or by funneling Chinese firms low-interest loans to grow and buy foreign competitors.

Once those companies got big enough, they were unleashed on the world. China plans to use this strategy to implement its new plan — "Made in China 2025" — to make itself the world leader in electric vehicles, new materials, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, biopharmacy, 5G mobile communications and other industries.

The latest annual survey of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, released in January, found that 81 percent of its members felt "less welcome" in China than in the past and had little confidence any longer that China would carry through on promises to open its markets. APCO Worldwide's James McGregor, one of the keenest

observers of China trade, recently noted that China tells the world that its policy is "reform and opening," but on the ground its policy "more resembles reform and closing."

Today, Alibaba can set up its own cloud server in America, but Amazon or Microsoft can't do the same in China. China just agreed to allow U.S. credit card giants, like Visa and MasterCard, access to its huge market — something it was required to do under W.T.O. rules but just dragged its feet on for years — but now domestic Chinese financial services companies, like UnionPay, so dominate the Chinese market that U.S. companies will be left to fight over the scraps. The world leader in industrial robots, the German company Kuka Robotics, was just bought by the Chinese company Midea; Beijing would never allow the U.S. to buy one of China's industrial gems like that.

This is not fair. China needs to know that some people who disagree with everything else Trump stands for — and who value a strong U.S.-China relationship — might just support Trump's idea for a border-adjustment tax on imports to level the playing field. Because our economic relationship with China is out of whack — and not just because China makes great products, but because we do, too, and it's high time they are all allowed through China's front door.



Trump's Russia Scandal Is Already Swallowing His Foreign Policy

Paul McLeary | 1 hour ago

9-11 minutes

On Aug. 8, 1974, President Richard Nixon famously gave an address to the nation in which he declared: "I shall resign the presidency effective at noon tomorrow." What's mostly been forgotten is that 40 percent of that speech focused on foreign policy.

That's of a piece with the entire 15-month period between the May 1973 appointment of Archibald Cox as special prosecutor to investigate the Watergate break-in and Nixon's departure from the White House. The Nixon administration made consequential foreign-policy decisions throughout this time — from approving the U.S.-backed coup of democratically elected Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende in Chile; to authorizing Operation Nickel Grass, a strategic airlift to deliver weapons and supplies to Israel during the Yom Kippur War; to participating in

two summits with Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., that resulted in limits on strategic nuclear weapon — that were undoubtedly influenced, in ways overt and subtle, by the mounting domestic pressures of the Watergate scandal and cover-up.

Which brings us to Donald Trump. America, and much of the world, is understandably fascinated with the circus of leaks, self-sabotage, and scandal currently emanating from the White House. The past 24 hours has brought a number of explosive revelations about the Russian interference in the election, and Washington is eagerly awaiting former FBI Director James Comey's Thursday testimony. But T

rump is likely to remain in the Oval Office at least until the various investigations into allegations of his presidential campaign's cooperation with Russia are completed

rump is likely to remain in the Oval Office at least until the various investigations into allegations of his presidential campaign's cooperation

with Russia are completed; if history is any indication, together these should take two or three years to finish. That's long enough for important foreign policies to be devised and implemented (or not) and unforeseen crises to force Trump to respond (or not).

If you follow international relations and are interested in America's role in the world, you'd be wise to divert your gaze from the daily headlines and reckon more seriously with Trump's foreign-policy agenda. But you should also note that agenda won't be static relative to the scandals that are engulfing his administration. In 1973, Anthony Lake and Leslie H. Gelb wrote a fascinating essay for this magazine titled "Watergate and Foreign Policy," which outlined all the ways that scandal would influence Nixon's foreign policy. Much of what they warned about happened, and all of it applies today.

Because Trump will have less time to focus on pursuing his foreign-policy agenda, the foreign-policy bureaucracy will have incentive to be more resistant than usual to

dictates from Trump-appointed leaders, while bureaucratic entrepreneurs will have an invitation to expand their power and influence (as Henry Kissinger did under Nixon). Meanwhile, congressional Republicans, sensing the White House's weakness, will be less likely to approve funding for Trump's pet foreign-policy projects, like a 350-ship Navy or a border wall with Mexico. And foreign allies and partners, if they believe Trump is unlikely to serve out his entire term, will be less willing to support Trump's specific diplomatic goals

Consider an issue at the center of Trump's present diplomatic agenda: North Korea. The most alarming and potentially consequential foreign-policy change since Jan. 20 has been the Trump administration's rhetorical approach to North Korea. After promising that the administration would "have no further comment," senior officials made a series of escalatory demands on Kim Jong Un's nuclear and missile programs and imposed a timeline for action on the United States by declaring "the clock has

now run out" and "this problem is coming to a head."

While telegraphing its desire to instigate a crisis with North Korea, the Trump administration has publicly articulated no plan or theory of success for how the "denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula actually happens. And in conversations with White House, Pentagon, and State Department officials and staffers about North Korea, I have heard nothing that indicates such a plan exists. The default course of action — tried unsuccessfully by the last two presidents — is to further lean on Beijing to further lean on Pyongyang. This will not work. Two weeks ago, I was fortunate to attend a workshop in Beijing, where a well-connected Chinese foreign-policy scholar stated bluntly: "You have to understand, China is more afraid of the United States than it is of North Korea." He further indicated that China's leaders prefer the status quo of a nuclear-armed North Korea over working with the United States to further destabilize, or even topple, the Kim regime.

When China inevitably refuses to coerce North Korea as strongly, or on the timeline, that the Trump administration demands, then what?

When China inevitably refuses to coerce North Korea as strongly, or on the timeline, that the Trump administration demands, then what? If the White House believes that North Korea has even a 10 or 20 percent probability of

being able to successfully launch an intercontinental ballistic missile mated with a nuclear warhead onto the United States, I believe that Trump would authorize a preemptive attack against the missile-launch site (assuming it is an easily observable, liquid-fueled missile) and perhaps against known nuclear weapons-related facilities.

Military officials, including Adm. Harry Harris, commander of the U.S. forces in the Pacific, have acknowledged that Kim would not simply absorb such an attack but would immediately retaliate against South Korea. This would trigger America's mutual defense treaty commitments to defend South Korea and spark a series of classified, pre-planned U.S.-South Korean military operations. When the Pentagon reviewed some version of this scenario in 1994 (before North Korea had a nuclear arsenal of at least a dozen bombs), it was estimated that such a retaliation could "cause hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of casualties."

But a President Trump facing ever-expanding scandals, continually low polling numbers, and even potential impeachment proceedings may decide that a preemptive attack on North Korea is worth the costs and consequences. The academic findings are mixed on whether heads of government facing domestic vulnerability engage in such diversionary wars — uses of

force to divert public attention and rally support for their leadership. Some analysts and scholars have examined whether George H.W. Bush's 1989 invasion of Panama or Bill Clinton's attacks on al Qaeda targets and Iraq in 1998 were examples of such diversionary tactics. What seems clear, however, is that presidents are more likely to engage in such diversions when they are inherently distrustful and perceive the world in simplistic black-and-white terms — a perfect characterization of Trump.

The other potential outcome to consider for the Trump administration's conduct of foreign policy is for an embattled president to become further and further detached while remaining in office. Toward the end of his presidency, Nixon spent an increasing amount of time in his "Western White House" in San Clemente, California, while Henry Kissinger served as both secretary of state and national security advisor and effectively ran U.S. foreign policy. Before and during the Turkish intervention in Cyprus in July 1974, Kissinger would simply call Nixon to inform him of what Kissinger had decided. Since Trump has already bestowed "total authorization" to Secretary of Defense James Mattis, it is not unimaginable that the Pentagon chief could be notifying a president who has retreated to one of his properties of meaningful military decisions already underway.

People hoping Trump will go away will be disappointed if comparable investigations of presidents are any criterion.

People hoping Trump will go away will be disappointed if comparable investigations of presidents are any criterion. The open-ended Lawrence Walsh independent counsel investigation into Iran-Contra took six years and seven months; the Robert Fiske/Kenneth Starr independent counsel investigation into the Whitewater land deal lasted four years and four months; even the Archibald Cox-Leon Jaworski-Henry Ruth investigation of Watergate lasted two years and two months, wrapping up 14 months after Nixon resigned.

Robert Mueller's team has reportedly gotten a quick start on setting up his office and forming a budget. However, it is improbable that this special counsel will deliver a final report much faster than his predecessors, and certainly not before the Nov. 6, 2018, midterm elections. Further leaks and scandals could increase the political pressure on Trump to such a degree that he resigns. But, while hoping or assuming this happens, it would be a grave mistake to ignore U.S. foreign-policy commitments and activities, and any shifts they might undergo under the influence of scandal.

Photo credit: ANDREW HARER/Pool/Getty Images



Ignatius : Putin's campaign of personal revenge against the United States

<https://www.facebook.com/davidignatiusbooks>

6-7 minutes

MOSCOW

At a cafe a few blocks from the old KGB headquarters at Lubyanka Square, investigative journalist Andrei Soldatov tries to explain the murky world of Russian intelligence that's now the focus of a U.S. criminal investigation into the hacking of the 2016 campaign.

Big events in today's Russia often aren't the product of broad strategy, argues Soldatov, but rather are "tactical moves" that reflect the personal interests of Vladimir Putin and his all-powerful "presidential administration."

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Soldatov thinks the Putin factor is crucial in understanding issues in the hacking investigation. Putin has a personal dislike of Hillary Clinton, and Russian intelligence had been gathering information about her since late summer 2015. But what may have pushed the Russian operation into a higher gear was the April 2016 publication of the so-called Panama Papers, which revealed secret bank accounts of some of Putin's close friends and associates.

"It was a personal attack," says Soldatov. "You cannot write about Putin's family or personal friends." He speculates that the Russian leader "wanted to do something about it, to teach a lesson."

Russian President Vladimir Putin denies any collusion took place between Russia and President Trump's campaign before Trump's inauguration. Putin spoke at a forum in St. Petersburg moderated by Megyn Kelly. Russian President

Vladimir Putin denies any collusion took place between Russia and President Trump's campaign before Trump's inauguration. (Reuters)

(Reuters)

Putin denounced the Panama Papers as a deliberate effort by America to embarrass him. "Officials and state agencies in the United States are behind all this," he charged in April 2016. "They are used to holding a monopoly on the international stage and do not want to have to make way for anyone else. ... Attempts are made to weaken us from within, make us more acquiescent and make us toe their line."

State Department spokesman Mark Toner denied at the time that the United States was "in any way involved in the actual leak of these documents." But he confirmed that the U.S. Agency for International Development had supported the Organized Crime and Corruption

Reporting Project, one of the media organizations involved in researching the Panama files. To the Russians, that was proof enough.

For Putin, the ex-KGB officer, nothing in the information arena is accidental. In a combative session last Friday at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, he rebuffed NBC's Megyn Kelly: "As for independent sources, there is nothing independent in this world." When she pressed about Russian "digital fingerprints" in the hacking of the Democratic National Committee, he exploded: "What fingerprints? Hoof prints? Horn prints?"

The day before, Putin had said that "patriotically minded" Russian private hackers might have been involved in the operation. But by Friday, he was in full denial mode, suggesting that the CIA could have manufactured the whole thing: "IP addresses can be simply made up. ... There are such IT specialists in

the world today, and they can arrange anything and then blame it on whoever.”

Soldatov argues that Russian intelligence taps a network of private hackers, much as the CIA and National Security Agency use private contractors to develop offensive cyberweapons and “zero-day exploits” for malware. “Although the [Russian] security and intelligence services have cyberwar capabilities, most of the actual strikes come through other channels,” he wrote in a post last year on his website, Agentura.ru. He cited the example of a Russian technology

company that allegedly was asked to help organize “sensitive” denial-of-service attacks.

The truth of what happened in the 2016 campaign will take many months to unravel, and there’s a cloud of misinformation, fueled by Putin, President Trump and insatiable media coverage. Soldatov notes, for instance, that the famous dossier compiled by former British spy Christopher Steele included “unverifiable” details and some “confusion” about facts. But Soldatov wrote in January for the Guardian that it’s also “a good reflection of how things are run in the Kremlin — the mess at the level

of decision-making and increasingly the outsourcing of operations.”

To Russian eyes, all information is potential disinformation, and secrets are hidden from the public. As Putin scolded Kelly last Friday: “A non-classified version means no version.” The Russians regard American media claims of independence as bogus, and they see their own propaganda outlets competing on equal terms with global media companies.

“Sputnik,” for example, had its own booth at the St. Petersburg forum. The director of national intelligence described Sputnik in a Jan. 6 report as part of “Russia’s state-run

propaganda machine,” but its brochures describe a media group publishing 2,000 news items a day in Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish and English.

As the investigation of Russian hacking rolls forward, we shouldn’t lose perspective: Russia isn’t a demonic, all-powerful presence. It’s a sophisticated, increasingly modern country. But it’s also the rare nation run by a former intelligence officer, who sees the world through a very particular lens.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Canada Says It Will Chart Its Own Course, Apart From U.S.

Paul Vieira

against Islamic State.

4-6 minutes

Updated June 6, 2017 5:51 p.m. ET

OTTAWA—Canada signaled it would pursue foreign-policy objectives that are in contrast to the growing isolationism of the U.S., marking a shift away from its historic alignment with its neighbor and most important trading partner.

In a speech to the legislature on Tuesday, Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland took the unusual step of expressing Canadian government discontent with the U.S., citing concerns about America’s growing protectionism, its withdrawal from the Paris climate-change agreement and the desire by its voters to “shrug off the burden of leadership” globally.

Canada plans to strengthen its military presence in the most dangerous parts of the world, Ms. Freeland said, and will on Wednesday release details on spending plans for a new defense policy. A boost in military spending and greater engagement would mark a departure for the Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who was elected on a campaign promise to end Canada’s direct combat role in the fight

“To rely solely on the U.S. security umbrella would make us a client state,” she said. “Such a dependence would not be in Canada’s interest....The fact that our friend and ally has come to question the very worth of its mantle of global leadership puts into sharper focus the need for the rest of us to set our own clear and sovereign course,” Ms. Freeland said.

While Ms. Freeland didn’t name U.S. President Donald Trump, she left little doubt that she was talking about U.S. leadership as she described the distance between the Canadian government and Trump administration policies on global trade, climate change, the commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the pursuit of women’s rights, including access to safe abortions.

The remarks are the latest in a string of warnings from world leaders about the risks of U.S. isolationism. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Europe can no longer rely on other countries, underscoring her concern with U.S. policy such as Mr. Trump’s refusal to publicly back a core tenet of NATO, that an attack on one member is an attack on all.

Ms. Freeland said the principle, known as Article 5, is “at the heart” of Canada’s security policy.

Ms. Freeland, who is also responsible for cross-border trade, highlighted Canada’s differences with the U.S. even as she faces renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, in talks scheduled to start in August. Mr. Trump was elected in part on a vow to revamp the trade pact incorporating the U.S., Canada and Mexico, which he has called a “disaster” and blamed for U.S. manufacturing job losses.

That criticism is misplaced, Ms. Freeland said. “It is wrong to view the woes of our middle class as the result of fiendish behavior by foreigners,” she said. “The real culprit is domestic policy that fails to appreciate that continued growth, and political stability, depend on domestic measures that share the wealth.”

The big surprise in the speech, observers say, was Ms. Freeland’s “strident endorsement” of a stronger Canadian military, said Colin Robertson, a former Canadian diplomat and now vice president at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, in Ottawa. “She gave every indication the government will make a robust investment in our security and defense,” he said.

Such an investment would move Canada closer to, although still below, the NATO target that member countries should spend 2% of gross domestic product on defense.

Last week, Mr. Trudeau joined Ms. Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron in publicly rebuking Mr. Trump for his decision last week to withdraw from the Paris climate-change accord.

Meanwhile, Mr. Trudeau and Ms. Merkel spoke by phone on Tuesday, at which time both Group of Seven leaders reiterated their commitment to multilateralism and the fight against climate change, according to a summary of the conversation released by Canadian officials.

They agreed to “continue working closely with like-minded partners to implement the historic Paris agreement on climate change,” the Canadian readout said.

—Jacquie McNish contributed to this article.

Write to Paul Vieira at paul.vieira@wsj.com

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The New York Times

Editorial : India’s Battered Free Press

The Editorial Board

3-4 minutes

Journalists outside the home of Prannoy Roy of NDTV on Monday, after it was raided by India’s Central Bureau of Investigation. Burhaan Kinu/Hindustan Times, via Getty Images

Press freedom in India suffered a fresh blow on Monday when the country’s main investigative agency raided homes and offices connected to the founders of NDTV, India’s oldest television news station. The raids mark an alarming new level of intimidation of India’s news media under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The story is a bit tangled, but here’s the gist: The Central Bureau of

Investigation says it conducted the raids because of a complaint that NDTV’s founders had caused “an alleged loss” to ICICI, a private bank, related to repayment of a loan. In 2009, ICICI said the note had been paid in full. Not really, the investigators said: A reduction in the interest rate had saddled the bank with a loss — hence the raid.

That doesn’t wash. India’s large corporations regularly default on

debt with nary a peep from authorities. In fact, even as India’s state-owned banks are holding bad debt of about \$186 billion, Mr. Modi’s government has hesitated to go after big defaulters. But suddenly we have dramatic raids against the founders of an influential media company — years after a loan was settled to a private bank’s satisfaction. To Mr. Modi’s critics, the inescapable conclusion is that

the raids were part of a "vendetta" against NDTV.

Since Mr. Modi took office in 2014, journalists have faced increasing pressures. They risk their careers — or lives — to report news that is critical of the government or delves into matters that powerful politicians and business interests do not want exposed. News outlets that run afoul of the government can lose

access to officials. The temptation to self-censor has grown, and news reports are increasingly marked by a shrill nationalism that toes the government line.

Through all this, NDTV has remained defiant. Last year, its Hindi-language station was ordered off the air for a day as punishment for reporting on a sensitive attack on an air base, but it stood by its

reporting, insisting that it was based on official briefings.

Praveen Swami, a reporter for The Indian Express newspaper, warned on Twitter that Monday's raids were "a defining moment," adding: "The last time this sort of thing happened was during the Emergency," a reference to the strict censorship of 1975-77 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of

emergency and ruled as an autocrat. Sadly, Mr. Swami's warning is warranted. The Central Bureau of Investigation said on Tuesday that it "fully respects the freedom of press." Even if that's true, the question still outstanding is whether Mr. Modi does.

ETATS-UNIS



Christopher Wray: Trump Picks New FBI Director

Madeline Farber

1-2 minutes

In a tweet early Wednesday morning, President Donald Trump announced he has picked Christopher A. Wray, a former assistant attorney general, to be the new Director of the FBI.

The pick, which still needs approval by the Senate, comes after the White House said Trump was interviewing two FBI candidates in late May, one of whom was Wray, according to the *New York Times*. Wray is a former assistant attorney general who oversaw the criminal division under President George W. Bush, according to the *Times*. Wray also represented Gov. Chris

Christie in the "Bridgegate" scandal, according to NJ.com.

I will be nominating Christopher A. Wray, a man of impeccable credentials, to be the new Director of the FBI. Details to follow.

- Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) June 7, 2017

Wray will replace James Comey, the former FBI Director Trump fired in early May. Comey was a top official who led a criminal investigation into whether or not Trump's advisers colluded with the Russians to sway the results of the 2016 presidential election.



Trump Tweets His Choice for FBI Director

Matt Ford

4-5 minutes

In a surprise announcement on Twitter Wednesday morning, President Trump said he would name former federal prosecutor Christopher Wray to be the next director of the FBI.

If confirmed, Wray would be the bureau's eighth director. He would enter the position with significant experience in federal law enforcement. Wray previously served as the head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division from 2003 to 2005 during the Bush administration, where he oversaw the prosecution of multiple post-9/11 terrorism cases and the Enron investigation. He also worked as an assistant U.S. attorney in northern Georgia during the late 1990s.

Critics of President Trump's handling of the FBI gave Trump some initial praise for the choice. "I think Trump's firing of James Comey was a travesty," Jack Goldsmith, who headed the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel when Wray led the Criminal Division, wrote on *Lawfare*. "But Wray is a good choice, a much better choice than any name I

previously saw floated, and a much better choice than I expected Trump to make."

Since leaving the Justice Department in 2005, Wray has worked in private practice at King & Spalding, a high-profile law firm that specializes in corporate litigation and white-collar crimes. He carved out a reputation there for representing corporations facing regulatory-compliance issues. Among his most recent clients was New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who he represented during the Bridgegate scandal.

The announcement comes one day before Wray's would-be predecessor James Comey testifies before Congress about his dramatic firing last month. Comey is expected to testify tomorrow about Trump's reported efforts to persuade him to drop an investigation into Michael Flynn, the former national-security adviser. Among the key questions Wray will face in his confirmation hearing is whether he will be able to resist similar attempts to pressure him.

Trump's hunt to replace Comey has been a tumultuous one. The president suggested before his week-long trip to the Middle East and Europe last month that Joe

Lieberman, a former Democratic senator from Connecticut, was his frontrunner for the job. But Lieberman's possible nomination received a cool reception on Capitol Hill, and when Trump returned from his overseas trip, the White House said it would restart the search.

Wray would lead the FBI's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election under the oversight of Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who took over the overall case last month, if confirmed by the Senate. The two men are well acquainted with one another: Wray, Mueller, and Comey previously worked together during the Bush administration when Mueller led the FBI and Comey served as Deputy Attorney General.

It was in those positions that the three men took part in one of the most dramatic moments in Justice Department history. In 2004, the Bush White House planned to reauthorize a warrantless-surveillance program known as Stellar Wind. Comey, who was acting attorney general at the time while John Ashcroft was hospitalized, questioned its constitutionality and enlisted Mueller for support.

As the program's expiration date neared, Comey and Mueller drafted letters of resignation to proffer if Bush reauthorized the program over their objections. Most of the top officials in the Justice Department and the FBI drafted similar letters, with Wray reportedly among them. Bush, who had been unaware of the imminent revolt until Comey and Mueller told him they would resign, added new limits to the program to avert it.

If confirmed, Wray could face similar clashes with the White House. Trump's growing frustration with the sprawling Russia investigation reportedly led him to ask Dan Coats, the director of national intelligence, and Mike Rogers, the director of the National Security Agency, to intervene with Comey to end the investigation in March. The president also reportedly asked Comey to pledge his personal loyalty to him as part of a broader effort to persuade the former FBI director to curb the probe into Flynn and other Trump campaign officials. Senators will undoubtedly ask whether Wray faced similar pressure from the president who could put him in charge of the nation's preeminent law-enforcement agency.

POLITICO Trump taps Christopher Wray to head FBI

By Louis Nelson

3-4 minutes

"I will be nominating Christopher A. Wray, a man of impeccable

credentials, to be the new Director of the FBI. Details to follow,"

President Donald Trump wrote online. | AP Photo

Wray served as an assistant attorney general from 2003 to 2005 and acted as Chris Christie's personal attorney during the Bridgegate scandal.

President Donald Trump will nominate Christopher Wray to be the next director of the FBI, he announced on Twitter Wednesday morning.

"I will be nominating Christopher A. Wray, a man of impeccable credentials, to be the new Director of the FBI. Details to follow," the president wrote.

Story Continued Below

Wray served as an assistant attorney general from 2003 to 2005 during the tenure of former President George W. Bush. He is

currently a partner at the law firm King & Spalding, where he chairs its special matters and government investigations practice group.

At the Justice Department, Wray was the assistant attorney general in charge of the department's criminal division. He was a member of Bush's corporate fraud task force and led the task force charged with investigating the Enron scandal.

More recently, Wray acted as New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's personal attorney during the federal investigation into lane closures on the George Washington Bridge that were put in place by members of Christie's administration as political retribution for a mayor who did not support the governor's reelection campaign.

Wray was one of two candidates, along with John Pistole, a former

TSA administrator and deputy FBI director, that Trump interviewed last week for the position. Former Sen. Joe Liberman was at one point believed to be the front-runner for the job but later withdrew himself from consideration while the president was abroad.

Trump has been in search of a new head for the FBI since last month, when he fired then-Director James Comey. The White House's initial explanation for the surprise firing centered around a recommendation from Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who pilloried the director's unusually public handling of the bureau's investigation into the personal email server maintained by Hillary Clinton during her tenure as secretary of state.

But Trump undercut that explanation days later in an interview with NBC News, in which

he said he had already made up his mind to fire Comey before meeting with Rosenstein and that he had made the decision with the bureau's ongoing Russia investigation on his mind.

Rosenstein has since appointed a special prosecutor to oversee the Russia investigation, a move Trump has railed against. Comey himself is scheduled to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee on Thursday, where is likely to be asked about reports that Trump pressured him to back off the bureau's investigation into former national security adviser Michael Flynn.

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**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL.**

Jeff Sessions Offered to Resign Amid Tension With Donald Trump (UNE)

Aruna Viswanatha and Del Quentin Wilber

5-6 minutes

June 6, 2017 10:14 p.m. ET

Attorney General Jeff Sessions offered to resign from his post in recent weeks, amid tension with President Donald Trump over his decision to recuse himself from the investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election, according to people familiar with the matter.

The offer wasn't a formal one, and Mr. Sessions, an early and steadfast supporter of Mr. Trump, doesn't want to quit and doesn't believe he should, the people said.

Mr. Sessions isn't expected to leave his post in the near term. But the exchange comes amid increasingly outward signs of displeasure from Mr. Trump and the White House regarding Mr. Sessions and the Justice Department more broadly.

The disclosure also comes as the Senate Intelligence Committee begins two intensive days of hearings that will include scrutiny of the administration's handling of the Russia investigation, featuring testimony from current and former Justice Department officials.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer wouldn't answer a question Tuesday about Mr. Trump's level of confidence in Mr. Sessions.

"I have not had a discussion with him about that," Mr. Spicer said at a White House briefing.

That answer stood in contrast to his response to the same question recently about Jared Kushner, Mr. Trump's son-in-law and a senior White House adviser. Asked last week if the president had confidence in Mr. Kushner, Mr. Spicer said "absolutely."

Mr. Trump's displeasure with Mr. Sessions appears to trace back to the attorney general's decision in March to remove himself from involvement in any Justice Department investigation related to the 2016 presidential race, following the disclosure that he had conversations with a Russian official while advising the Trump campaign. That contact appeared at odds with testimony he gave during his confirmation hearing.

Immediately following Mr. Sessions' recusal, Mr. Trump reiterated his support for the attorney general, saying in a series of tweets that he is "an honest man" and that "the Democrats are overplaying their hand."

But he privately berated several top aides in the Oval Office after learning of Mr. Sessions' recusal, and he has since then repeatedly expressed frustration about that decision, one White House official said.

The president, who has denied any involvement with Russia's alleged hacking of Democratic and other political organizations during the election, viewed Mr. Sessions' decision as a sign of weakness, the official said.

Following the recusal, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein named Robert Mueller III to serve as special counsel to head the investigation into the Russia matter, a decision Mr. Trump has made it clear he is unhappy with.

Mr. Sessions' resignation offer also came around the time the Justice Department was dealing with Mr. Trump's unexpected firing of former Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey. The circumstances surrounding Mr. Comey's firing will be front-and-center during hearings this week before the Senate Intelligence Committee.

These start Wednesday with a session featuring Mr. Rosenstein, Acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats and National Security Agency Director Mike Rogers. Senators are expected to press some of these officials on whether Mr. Trump asked them to publicly play down aspects of the Russia probe.

An even higher-profile hearing follows Thursday when Mr. Comey will testify before the same committee. He is expected to tell senators Mr. Trump asked him to back off the FBI's scrutiny of former national security adviser Michael Flynn, an allegation Mr. Trump has disputed.

Mr. Sessions was the first U.S. senator to endorse Mr. Trump's presidential bid and was a vocal advocate for him during the campaign, at a time when few

established Republicans were publicly supporting Mr. Trump. He was among the first appointments to the president's cabinet, and his staffers and former aides have taken jobs in the White House and across the administration.

On Monday, Mr. Trump took to Twitter to complain about the Justice Department, which Mr. Sessions leads, and its approach to his executive order suspending U.S. entry to visitors from six predominantly Muslim countries. Two versions of the order were rejected by multiple courts; the second version is now being appealed to the Supreme Court.

"The Justice Dept. should have stayed with the original Travel Ban, not the watered down, politically correct version they submitted to S.C.," Mr. Trump wrote.

Still, Mr. Trump signed both the initial and the revised version of the order, and only the president, not the Justice Department, is constitutionally empowered to issue executive orders.

—Michael C. Bender and Carol E. Lee contributed to this article.

Write to Aruna Viswanatha at Aruna.Viswanatha@wsj.com and Del Quentin Wilber at del.wilber@wsj.com

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition as 'Sessions Offered to Quit Amid Strains With Trump.'

Trump, furious and frustrated, gears up to punch back at Comey testimony

<https://www.facebook.com/PhilipRuckerWP>

12-15 minutes

Alone in the White House in recent days, President Trump — frustrated and defiant — has been spoiling for a fight, according to his confidants and associates.

Glued even more than usual to the cable news shows that blare from the televisions in his private living quarters, or from the 60-inch flat screen he had installed in his cramped study off the Oval Office, he has fumed about “fake news.” Trump has seethed as his agenda has stalled in Congress and the courts. He has chafed against the pleas for caution from his lawyers and political advisers, tweeting whatever he wants, whenever he wants.

And on Thursday, the president will come screen-to-screen with the FBI director he fired, James B. Comey, thoughts of whom have consumed, haunted and antagonized Trump since Comey launched an expanding Russia investigation that the president slammed as a “witch hunt.”

Comey’s testimony is a political Super Bowl — with television networks interrupting regular programming to air it, and some Washington offices and bars making plans for special viewings.

Trump is keen to be a participant rather than just another viewer, two senior White House officials said, including the possibility of taking to Twitter to offer acerbic commentary during the hearing.

With former FBI director James Comey due to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee on June 8, here’s what to expect from the high-profile hearing. With former FBI director James Comey due to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee on June 8, here’s what to expect from the high-profile hearing. (Video: Jenny Starrs/Photo: Cliff Owen/The Washington Post)

(Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

“I wish him luck,” the president told reporters on Tuesday.

“He’s infuriated at a deep-gut, personal level that the elite media has tolerated [the Russia story] and praised Comey,” former House speaker Newt Gingrich said. “He’s

not going to let some guy like that smear him without punching him as hard as he can.”

[All eyes will be on James Comey this Thursday — again]

This account of Trump’s mind-set and the preparations of his team in the run-up to Comey’s testimony is based on interviews with 20 White House officials, Trump friends and other well-connected Republicans, many of whom spoke only on the condition of anonymity to offer candid perspectives.

The president’s lawyers and aides have been urging him to resist engaging, and they hope to keep him busy Thursday with other events meant to compete for his — and the news media’s — attention.

“The president’s going to have a very, very busy day,” White House press secretary Sean Spicer said. “I think his focus is going to be on pursuing the agenda and the priorities that he was elected to do.”

As of now, Trump’s Thursday morning — when Comey is scheduled to start testifying — is open. He plans to deliver a 12:30 p.m. speech at the Faith and Freedom Coalition’s conference in Washington, followed by a 3:30 p.m. meeting with governors and mayors on infrastructure projects.

The Post’s Robert Costa explores how the Senate testimony of former FBI director James B. Comey on June 8 could have a lasting impact on President Trump’s tenure. The Senate testimony of former FBI director James B. Comey on June 8 could have a lasting impact on President Trump’s tenure. Here’s why. (Bastien Inzaurrealde/The Washington Post)

(Bastien Inzaurrealde/The Washington Post)

Jay Sekulow, a high-profile conservative lawyer in Washington, has met several times recently with Trump and said he found the president to have his attention squarely on his proposals.

“He’s been very much in control and in command,” Sekulow said. “I don’t sense any siege or panic at all. . . . I’ve been there a lot, and I don’t see the president in any context distracted or flustered by any of this. I just don’t see it.”

But privately, Trump’s advisers said they are bracing for a worst-case scenario: that he ignores their advice and tweets his mind.

“He’s not going to take an attack by James Comey laying down,” said Roger Stone, a longtime Trump friend and former political adviser. “Trump is a fighter, he’s a brawler and he’s the best counterpuncher in American politics.”

The president increasingly has come to see Twitter as his preferred method of communicating with his supporters, no matter the pitfalls.

“The FAKE MSM is working so hard trying to get me not to use Social Media. They hate that I can get the honest and unfiltered message out,” Trump tweeted on Tuesday morning, making a reference to the “mainstream media.”

[The broadcast networks will air Comey’s hearing live. That’s a big deal.]

The West Wing, meanwhile, has taken on an atmosphere of legal uncertainty. White House counsel Donald F. McGahn has told staff to hold onto emails, documents and phone records, officials said, a move of caution designed to prepare the staff for future legal requests, should they come. McGahn has specifically advised staffers to avoid what are known as the “burn bags” in the executive branch that are often used to discard papers.

While people familiar with the White House counsel’s office described McGahn’s moves as appropriate steps because of the ongoing probes, they said many junior staffers are increasingly skittish and fearful of their communications eventually finding their way into the hands of investigators.

Some staffers nervous about their own personal liability are contemplating hiring lawyers and have become more rigorous about not putting things in text messages or emails that they would not want to be subpoenaed, one person familiar with the situation said.

Attempting to invoke executive privilege to restrict Comey’s testimony was never seriously considered by Trump or his legal team, said one senior White House official. But, this official added, the White House liked floating the possibility as a distraction.

In the weeks leading up to Comey’s testimony, the White House had privately tried to erect a war room that would handle the communications and legal strategies for responding to the Russia matter. Former Trump

campaign aides Corey Lewandowski and David Bossie were in discussions to lead it.

But the plan was scuttled, as with so much else in Trump’s administration, because of internal disagreements, according to multiple officials. Arguments included whether the war room would be run from inside or outside the gates of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.; who would staff it; whether they could be trusted by the president’s high-ranking advisers, or even trust one another; and whether Marc Kasowitz, Trump’s outside counsel, would ultimately control the message.

Kasowitz, who has a long-standing relationship with Trump, has been operating as an island of sorts in Trump world. He has been meeting regularly with the president and has a nascent relationship with McGahn, but he has not widely shared his legal strategy within the West Wing, according to two officials involved.

Kasowitz, whose combative personality mirrors Trump’s, has not found it easy to entice other big-name lawyers with Washington experience to join the cause because many prominent attorneys are reluctant to have him giving them direction and wonder whether he will be able to keep Trump from stumbling, one official said.

In the absence of a war room — and with the departure of communications director Michael Dubke — planning for the White House’s response to the Comey hearing has fallen largely to Chief of Staff Reince Priebus and his lieutenants.

Trump’s team is preparing a campaign-style line of attack aimed at undercutting Comey’s reputation. They plan to portray him as a “showboat” and to bring up past controversies from his career, including his handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation in 2016, according to people involved in the planning.

The Republican National Committee has lined up a roster of surrogates to appear on conservative news stations nationwide to defend Trump. But a list the RNC distributed on Tuesday could hardly be described as star-studded: The names include Bob Paduchik, an RNC co-chair who worked on Trump’s Ohio campaign; Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi (R); and Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge (R).

Trump so far has been unable to recruit reinforcements for his beleaguered senior staff. Conversations about former Trump campaign official David Urban possibly joining the White House have stalled, although he remains in contact with several Trump advisers, officials said.

[Trump's legal team falters as D.C. heavyweights take a pass]

The White House has long struggled with its communications team, with Trump both privately and publicly voicing displeasure with his current staff. Press secretary Sean Spicer has started appearing less frequently on camera, and Trump and several top advisers, including son-in-law Jared Kushner, are considering a range of options to revamp the structure.

The White House recently approached Geoff Morrell — who served as the Pentagon press secretary for more than four years under former defense secretary Robert Gates — about coming inside the administration and overhauling the communications operation, according to three people with knowledge of the overture.

Morrell declined to comment, but BP announced last month that Morrell would be moving to London

this summer to run government relations and communications for the company globally.

Scott Reed, senior political strategist at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, was also approached about taking a communications role within the White House, according to two people familiar with the outreach. Reed declined to comment.

In addition, Laura Ingraham, a conservative talk-radio host and Trump friend, discussed joining the White House but made clear to officials that she is more comfortable remaining outside as a vocal Trump ally because of her many broadcasting and media commitments, officials said.

Some Trump loyalists outside the White House who are preparing to go on television news shows Thursday to defend the president and undermine Comey's testimony said they have been given no talking points, nor seen any evidence of a strategy taking shape. One such loyalist said external supporters are afraid to coordinate too closely with the White House because they fear they could be accused of obstructing justice.

Trump is personally reaching out to some allies on the Senate

Intelligence Committee ahead of their questioning of Comey. He was scheduled to have dinner Tuesday night at the White House with Sens. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), both committee members, along with a few other lawmakers. The dinner had been long scheduled for the president to offer a debrief on his foreign trip, a senior White House official said.

In the West Wing, people close to the president and junior aides fear that the president's erratic behavior could have sweeping legal and political consequences, and they are beleaguered by how he has not proved able to concentrate fully on his agenda — this was supposed to be "infrastructure week," for instance. Many are also resigned to the idea that there is little they can do to moderate or thwart Trump's moves, so instead they are focused on managing the fallout.

One Republican close to the White House summed up the staff's mantra as: "Please, don't, you're not helping things."

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But Trump and several political intimates see a political advantage to the president personally

engaging, however unseemly it may appear to traditionalists.

"He believes in the long run there is an enormous premium on being the person who stands there fighting," said Gingrich, author of "Understanding Trump," an upcoming book. "People respond to that and wonder if he's fighting this hard, maybe he's right and the other guys are wrong. It's the core of how he operates."

Alan Dershowitz, a Harvard Law School professor and criminal law expert whose television commentary on the Russia probe has caught the White House's attention, said he understands why the president would be motivated to speak out to counter Comey's testimony.

"Every lawyer would tell the president not to tweet, not to react," Dershowitz said. "But he's not listening. This is typical. I tell my clients all the time not to talk and they simply disregard it. It'd be very hard to tell a very wealthy, very powerful man not to tweet. He thinks, 'I tweeted my way to the presidency,' and he's determined to tweet."

Mary Jordan and Amber Phillips contributed to this report.

The Washington Post **Comey Told Sessions: Don't Leave Me Alone With Trump**

Michael S. Schmidt reports on new revelations about James B. Comey's appeal to Attorney General Jeff Sessions to ward off pressure from the White House.

By NATALIE RENEAU, ROBIN STEIN and A.J. CHAVAR on Publish Date June 6, 2017. Photo by Gabriella Demczuk for The New York Times. Watch in Times Video »

WASHINGTON — The day after President Trump asked James B. Comey, the F.B.I. director, to end an investigation into his former national security adviser, Mr. Comey confronted Attorney General Jeff Sessions and said he did not want to be left alone again with the president, according to current and former law enforcement officials.

Mr. Comey believed Mr. Sessions should protect the F.B.I. from White House influence, the officials said, and pulled him aside after a meeting in February to tell him that private interactions between the F.B.I. director and the president were inappropriate. But Mr. Sessions could not guarantee that the president would not try to talk to Mr. Comey alone again, the officials said.

Mr. Comey did not reveal, however, what had so unnerved him about his Oval Office meeting with the president: Mr. Trump's request that the F.B.I. director end the investigation into the former national security adviser, Michael T. Flynn, who had just been fired. By the time Mr. Trump fired Mr. Comey last month, Mr. Comey had disclosed the meeting to a few of his closest advisers but nobody at the Justice Department, according to the officials, who did not want to be identified discussing Mr. Comey's interactions with Mr. Trump and Mr. Sessions.

Mr. Comey will be the center of attention on Thursday during testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee, where he is expected to be quizzed intensely about his interactions with Mr. Trump and why he decided to keep secret the president's request to end the Flynn investigation.

Continue reading the main story

His unwillingness to be alone with the president reflected how deeply Mr. Comey distrusted Mr. Trump, who Mr. Comey believed was trying to undermine the F.B.I.'s independence as it conducted a highly sensitive investigation into

links between Mr. Trump's associates and Russia, the officials said. By comparison, Mr. Comey met alone at least twice with President Barack Obama.

A spokesman for the F.B.I. declined to comment on Mr. Comey's request. A Justice Department spokesman, Ian Prior, said, "The attorney general doesn't believe it's appropriate to respond to media inquiries on matters that may be related to ongoing investigations."

The Justice Department typically walls off the White House from criminal investigations to avoid even the appearance of political meddling in law enforcement. But Mr. Trump has repeatedly injected himself in law enforcement matters, and never more dramatically than in his private meetings with Mr. Comey.

"You have the president of the United States talking to the director of the F.B.I., not just about any criminal investigation, but one involving his presidential campaign," said Matthew S. Axelrod, who served in senior Justice Department roles during the Obama administration and is now a partner at the law firm Linklaters. "That is such a sharp departure from all the

past traditions and rules of the road."

But that raises one of the questions Mr. Comey will have to answer in his testimony on Thursday. If he believed that Mr. Trump was trying to get him to end an investigation, why did he not tell anyone about it?

Mr. Trump's defenders note that Andrew G. McCabe, the acting director of the F.B.I., has said that "there has been no effort to impede our investigation." Current and former law enforcement officials say Mr. Comey kept his interactions with Mr. Trump a secret in part because he was not sure whom at the Justice Department he could trust.

F.B.I. officials were also unsure whether what Mr. Trump had done was a crime or how the conversation could be corroborated. So Mr. Comey kept the circle of officials at the F.B.I. who knew about his interactions with Mr. Trump small because he did not want agents and analysts working on the case to be influenced by what the president wanted.

Mr. Comey's decision to keep his interactions with Mr. Trump a secret from the Justice Department were the latest example of how he set himself apart from the department

throughout his tenure as F.B.I. director.

Several times during the F.B.I.'s investigation into Hillary Clinton's personal email server last year, for example, Mr. Comey made decisions without the Justice Department's knowledge or approval, often to the consternation of Loretta Lynch, then the attorney general. Mr. Comey has said he made those decisions — which have been praised and criticized along partisan lines — to protect the F.B.I.'s independence.

"In a legal sense, we're not independent of the Department of Justice," Mr. Comey told Congress last month. "We are spiritually, culturally pretty independent group, and that's the way you would want it."

Mr. Comey is also likely to be asked Thursday what he told Mr. Trump about the Russia investigation. Mr. Trump has told aides and said publicly that, on three occasions, Mr. Comey assured him he was not under investigation.

Current and former law enforcement officials said that when the investigation was handed over last month to a special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, Mr. Trump was not a target. But it is not clear what, if anything, Mr. Comey told the president about whether he was being investigated.

While Justice Department policy allows officials to tell people whether they are the target of an investigation, prosecutors — not F.B.I. agents — handle such discussions. "We typically do not answer that question," Mr. McCabe testified recently.

Former officials say Mr. Comey anticipated that the president might ask whether he was being investigated, and consulted his advisers on how to delicately sidestep the question. The officials were not aware of how Mr. Comey decided to answer.

When the Justice Department transferred the Russia investigation to Mr. Mueller, it gave him the authority to investigate whether the

president broke any laws by trying to obstruct the case or by firing Mr. Comey.

As F.B.I. director, Mr. Comey wrote a detailed memo after every major phone call or meeting with Mr. Trump and left the memos in the bureau's files when he left. As special counsel, Mr. Mueller has access to those memos, but the F.B.I. declined a request from the Senate Intelligence Committee for copies, citing the ongoing investigation. It is unclear whether Mr. Comey still has copies of all of them or plans to read from them during his testimony.

According to people briefed on the memos, they describe not only what Mr. Trump said, but also details such as his tone and where he was sitting. In one memo, Mr. Comey described a dinner with Mr. Trump at the White House a week after the inauguration in January. Mr. Trump asked Mr. Comey to pledge his loyalty, but Mr. Comey refused.

Two weeks later, on Feb. 14, Mr. Trump kicked Vice President Mike

Pence, Mr. Sessions and other senior administration officials out of the Oval Office so he could have his one-on-one conversation with Mr. Comey, according to people briefed on one of Mr. Comey's memos.

It was in that conversation that Mr. Trump asked Mr. Comey to end the investigation into Mr. Flynn and encouraged him to investigate leaks, the people said.

"I hope you can see your way clear to letting this go, to letting Flynn go," Mr. Trump told Mr. Comey, according to the memo Mr. Comey wrote describing that meeting. "He is a good guy. I hope you can let this go."

Asked Tuesday about Mr. Comey's coming testimony, Mr. Trump replied, "I wish him luck."

Maggie Haberman contributed reporting.

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Top intelligence official told associates Trump asked him if he could intervene with Comey on FBI Russia probe (UNE)

By Adam Entous

for Coats and CIA Director Mike Pompeo.

probe after Comey revealed its existence]

lawyers, who did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

8-9 minutes

The Washington Post's Adam Entous explains how President Trump asked two top ranking intelligence officials to publicly deny any connection between his campaign and Russia. The Washington Post's Adam Entous explains how President Trump asked two top ranking intelligence officials to publicly deny any connection between his campaign and Russia. (Whitney Leaming/The Washington Post)

(Whitney Leaming/The Washington Post)

The nation's top intelligence official told associates in March that President Trump asked him if he could intervene with then-FBI Director James B. Comey to get the bureau to back off its focus on former national security adviser Michael Flynn in its Russia probe, according to officials.

On March 22, less than a week after being confirmed by the Senate, Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats attended a briefing at the White House together with officials from several government agencies. As the briefing was wrapping up, Trump asked everyone to leave the room except

The president then started complaining about the FBI investigation and Comey's handling of it, said officials familiar with the account Coats gave to associates. Two days earlier, Comey had confirmed in a congressional hearing that the bureau was probing whether Trump's campaign coordinated with Russia during the 2016 race.

[Inside Trump's anger and impatience — and his sudden decision to fire Comey]

After the encounter, Coats discussed the conversation with other officials and decided that intervening with Comey as Trump had suggested would be inappropriate, according to officials who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive internal matters.

The events involving Coats show the president went further than just asking intelligence officials to deny publicly the existence of any evidence showing collusion during the 2016 election, as The Washington Post reported in May. The interaction with Coats indicates that Trump aimed to enlist top officials to have Comey curtail the bureau's probe.

[Trump asked intelligence chiefs to push back against FBI collusion

Coats will testify on Wednesday before the Senate Intelligence Committee. Lawmakers on the panel said they would press him for information about his interactions with the president regarding the FBI investigation.

The question of whether the president obstructed the Russia investigation is expected to take center stage this week with Comey's highly anticipated testimony on the Hill on Thursday. Comey associates say that before the director was fired in May, the president had asked him to drop the investigation into Flynn, and Comey refused.

Brian P. Hale, a spokesman for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), declined to comment on whether Trump asked Coats to intervene with Comey regarding the Flynn investigation. Hale said in a statement: "Director Coats does not discuss his private conversations with the President. However, he has never felt pressured by the President or anyone else in the Administration to influence any intelligence matters or ongoing investigations."

A spokesman for Pompeo declined to comment on the closed-door discussions. The White House referred questions to outside

Trump has repeatedly denied any coordination took place between his campaign and the Russian government, which, according to U.S. intelligence agencies, stole emails embarrassing to Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and leaked them to undermine her campaign.

Team Trump's ties to Russian interests

Flynn had served as an enthusiastic surrogate for Trump during the campaign and then was fired after just 24 days as national security adviser over revelations he misrepresented his discussions with the Russian ambassador to the United States.

[Flynn's swift downfall: From a phone call to a forced resignation]

The incidents suggest that Trump may not have appreciated the traditional barriers meant to insulate the intelligence agencies from politics.

Though the ODNI oversees other intelligence agencies, the FBI director operates independently on many matters. For example, Comey kept James R. Clapper Jr., Coats's predecessor in the Obama administration, in the dark about the bureau's investigation into possible

coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia.

A day or two after the March 22 meeting, the president followed up with a phone call to Coats, according to officials familiar with the discussions. In the call, Trump asked Coats to issue a public statement denying the existence of any evidence of coordination between his campaign and the Russian government. Again, Coats decided not to act on the request.

Trump similarly approached Adm. Mike Rogers, the director of the National Security Agency, to ask him to publicly deny the existence of any evidence of coordination, as The Post previously reported, according to current and former officials. Like Coats, Rogers refused to comply with the president's request.

Trump announced in January that he was nominating Coats to serve as director of national intelligence, responsible for overseeing U.S. intelligence agencies and for briefing the president on global developments.

In February, as tensions flared between intelligence agencies and the White House over Russia and other issues, some of Trump's advisers floated the idea of appointing a New York billionaire, Stephen A. Feinberg, to undertake a review of the ODNI. Coats, who was preparing for his confirmation hearing, felt blindsided, officials said.

The White House backed away from the idea of naming Feinberg after Coats, members of the intelligence community and Congress raised objections.

Officials say Trump's advisers have since revived their proposal to appoint Feinberg to a senior position, possibly to review the roles of the ODNI and other intelligence agencies.

Checkpoint newsletter

Military, defense and security at home and abroad.

Some officials said they viewed the prospective appointment of Feinberg as an effort by White House officials to put pressure on intelligence agencies to close ranks with the White House.

In an appearance last month before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Coats refused to provide details about his interactions with Trump.

But he indicated that he would cooperate with the Russia probe now being led by special counsel Robert S. Mueller III. Under questioning by Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), Coats said that if asked, he would provide details of his conversations with Trump to Mueller.

Coats also said that if he is called before an investigative committee, such as the Senate Intelligence Committee, "I certainly will provide them with what I know and what I don't know." He said the Trump administration had not directed the ODNI to withhold information from members of Congress conducting oversight.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

5-7 minutes

June 6, 2017 7:41 p.m. ET

The president who tweeted last week to complain about his "covfefe" last year ran a campaign. Whatever you like to believe about certain Trump companions and their conversations with Russian persons, nothing about it suggested an organization capable of participating in an arch conspiracy with a foreign intelligence agency. The campaign was a typically disorganized, free-form, low-budget Trump production. People came and went with head-spinning speed while having distressingly little effect on the candidate.

That's why the storm that is getting ready to break may have a lot less to do with Trump collusion than you think. House Intelligence Committee subpoenas name three former Obama officials related to the "unmasking" of Americans captured in the vast electronic trawl supposedly undertaken purely for foreign intelligence purposes.

One subpoena concerns former U.N. Ambassador Samantha Power, with no intelligence responsibilities but personally close to President Obama. Why?

This comes amid a report from the U.S.'s Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court about a pattern of Obama violations of the privacy of Americans

Jenkins Jr.: Who's Conspiracy Mongering Now?

Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.

"incidentally" caught up in foreign surveillance. We already know of one unmasking illegally leaked to the press for political purposes, Mike Flynn.

More important, we know one case of foreign intelligence seen by U.S. officials turning out to be a Russian plant, i.e., the fake document concerning Hillary Clinton that prompted James Comey's intervention in the campaign.

So add two questions to the list. Did Obama officials use allegations about Trump-Russia connections as an excuse to abuse intelligence collection for political purposes, and how much intelligence that caught their interest was actually fake intelligence planted by Russia? The obvious case being the scurrilous Trump dossier that was widely circulated internally and leaked to the media.

You can doubt his perspicacity, but Mr. Trump's view of Russia is far from inexplicable, and voters got a full blast of it during the campaign. Vladimir Putin walks all over the U.S. because our leaders are weak. Russia relations were a specific case of the general Trumpian pitch. He is a strong leader who, with his amazing personality, would transform bad situations into good ones.

Improved relations with Russia have been the aim of every president since the collapse of the Berlin Wall, and indeed every president since FDR.

Presidents and presidents-elect have been using secret emissaries and back channels forever.

If the Trump campaign directed or cooperated in illegal acts by Russia, that would be collusion in the sense of contributing to a crime. If Mr. Flynn promised privately what Trump was saying publicly, that he would seek better relations with Russia, as a deliberate inducement to encourage Russian meddling in the race, most of us would consider that an impeachable offense.

But unable to substantiate any such allegation, the media reach for an error so bad it has a name—the equivocation fallacy. Thus Jared Kushner is accused of, *after the election*, trying to "collude" with Russia in settling the Syrian war—the ad absurdum case of trying to make those seven letters c-o-l-l-u-d-e substitute for proof of something nefarious.

The qualifications for president are light and Donald Trump meets them all. He's a natural-born U.S. citizen of the requisite age. He received a majority of the electoral vote. U.S. voters are entitled to elect someone whom their fellow citizens consider an idiot, and may even have good reason for doing so since every election is a binary choice between X and Y.

Let's also recognize that the U.S. voter has hit very few home runs in 228 years. Presidents are a mixed bag—always. Even Obama idolaters by now should be rethinking how he spent his first two years, which ended up throwing

away the last six and helped bring Mr. Trump to power (ironically, thanks to many frustrated "hope and change" Obama voters in the Midwest).

And certainly nothing about Sarbanes-Oxley, the Medicare drug benefit, the Iraq war, or the Department of Homeland Security makes us particularly long for George W. Bush.

Mr. Trump is many things, but he's not an idiot. He has a deep, instinctive understanding of New York political, real estate and media culture, and, like many presidents, now is struggling to apply his mostly irrelevant knowledge to a job he is poorly prepared for. He still strikes us as a good bet not to finish his term—his age, his temperament, the anti-synergy between his business interests and his White House life, the latter not helped by his classy in-laws.

But unless you think everything was hunky dory, or unless you're a member of the class for whom his status is a threat to your status, his election was exactly what you want in a democracy, a timely message from the electorate to the class of people who make it their profession to try to lead us. Never mind what fairer-minded historians write, even liberal ones will say the seminal fact of Mr. Trump's time was how quickly his critics sank to his conspiracy-mongering level and worse.

Appeared in the June 7, 2017, print edition.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Editorial : The 'Private' Jim Comey

4-5 minutes

The media are pitching James Comey's Thursday testimony as the biggest since Watergate, and the former FBI director may provide high Trumpian drama. Let's hope Congress also challenges Mr. Comey on matters he'd rather not talk about.

The politically savvy Mr. Comey has a knack for speaking in congenial forums such as the clubby Senate Intelligence Committee he'll address Thursday. By contrast he is refusing to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee—where he came under a grilling in May, days before he was fired—though there is no bar to him testifying more than once.

Circa News is also reporting (and we have confirmed) that Mr. Comey is refusing to answer seven questions sent to him in a letter from Judiciary on

May 26. The bipartisan request is from Republican Chairman Chuck Grassley and ranking Democrat Dianne Feinstein, as well as the chairman and ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism.

The questions are aimed at discovering how the contents of Mr. Comey's famous "memo" to himself came to be splashed across the press. This still private memo reportedly says President Trump asked Mr. Comey to back off an investigation into former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, and its contents surfaced in the New York Times not long after Mr. Comey was fired—courtesy of an unidentified Comey "associate."

The Judiciary letter asks if Mr. Comey created other memos about interactions with Justice Department officials or Mr. Trump; if he shared the contents of his memos with people inside or outside the Justice Department; if he retained copies of the memos, and if so to turn them over to the committee.

We're told Mr. Comey replied via email that he didn't have to answer the questions because he is now a "private citizen." But that same private citizen will be opining in front of a national TV audience before a committee investigating serious questions of law and intelligence. Mr. Comey shouldn't be able to pick and choose which of his memos he sends to Congress and which he can keep for his memoirs. If Mr. Comey wrote those memos while FBI director, as his talkative pals claim, the memos are government work product and he has a duty to provide them to investigators.

The "private citizen" excuse is useful in that it exposes that Mr. Comey's main goal will be providing testimony against Mr. Trump while reviving his own reputation. Tip for Thursday viewing: Notice if Mr. Comey answers questions selectively, ducking those he doesn't like behind the cover of Robert Mueller's special-counsel investigation.

The Intelligence Committee shouldn't let him get away with it. If

Mr. Comey wants a public stage to tell his side of the Trump story, fair enough. But he should also be required to provide actual copies of his memos (if they exist), disclose with whom he shared them, and where they are now stored. He should also tell the country if President Trump was a target of the Russia investigation while he supervised it at the FBI.

Oh, and someone should also ask Mr. Comey if it's true, as the Washington Post has reported, that the FBI probe of Hillary Clinton's emails was triggered by a phony document provided by Russian intelligence. The point of this Congressional oversight is to help the public understand how Russia tried to meddle with American democracy, and Mr. Comey's duty didn't end with his dismissal.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Stephanie Armour and Louise Radnofsky

7-9 minutes

Updated June 6, 2017 7:05 p.m. ET

WASHINGTON—Republican senators left their first decision-making meeting on overhauling the nation's health-care system Tuesday deeply divided over the fate of Medicaid, a fissure that threatens to thwart their ambitions to dismantle the Affordable Care Act.

The divide among Senate Republicans over Medicaid was wide enough that some GOP lawmakers and aides said they now believe it may be impossible to broker a deal to unwind the health law known as Obamacare. Some senators are already preparing to move to another goal, an overhaul of the tax code.

"It's more likely to fail than not," Sen. Lindsey Graham (R., S.C.) said of the health bill, citing the GOP's hardening factions over how to handle the expansion of Medicaid ushered in by former President Barack Obama's 2010 health law. "We need to bring this to an end and move to taxes."

There are signs that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R., Ky.) may be ready to quickly pivot to a tax-code overhaul if the

GOP Senators' Medicaid Clash Jeopardizes Health Deal

Kristina Peterson,

health-care bill cannot garner sufficient support. Republicans hold 52 seats in the chamber.

Vice President Mike Pence would break a 50-50 tie on health care if one emerges, but Republicans can still lose no more than two votes, assuming all Democrats are opposed. Mr. McConnell is expected to bring up the health bill for a vote in the Senate whether or not it has enough votes, GOP lawmakers said, which could show that the chamber faces no choice other than to move on.

"Many Republicans don't want to see the cuts to Medicaid as severe as proposed in the House bill, but there are a critical number on the other side who want to see more severe cuts," Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York, the chamber's Democratic leader, said Tuesday. "Pretty hard to solve that problem."

House Republicans, in a bill passed last month, would continue the law's expanded federal-funding levels for Medicaid until 2020 and then gradually phase them out, likely prompting states to end the expanded coverage. The House GOP bill would trim \$834 billion over 10 years from Medicaid, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Medicaid is a federal-state program that provides health coverage for about one in five Americans, including children, the disabled and millions of poor, working-age people.

The 2010 law ushered in sweeping changes to Medicaid, particularly in the 31 states that opted to expand eligibility with significant federal funding. Now, many Republicans from those states are wary of passing legislation that could sharply curtail Medicaid's funding.

"I'm concerned about insuring as many people as we can," Sen. John Boozman (R., Ark.) said. "On the other hand, we have a real problem with the marketplace working."

The issue pits Republican-controlled states against one another at a time when GOP leaders are eager to see relatively fast action on the bill in the Senate. If Senate Republicans can pass legislation before the July 4 break, that would give them time to hammer out differences with the House before the five-week August recess.

States that expanded Medicaid under the law are anxious not to see people lose health coverage or state budgets squeezed. States that didn't expand Medicaid are reluctant to see other states benefit financially for making a choice they considered irresponsible.

There are about an equal numbers of red states in each camp. Sens. Rob Portman of Ohio and Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania, both Republicans, are taking the lead on the Medicaid issue within a group of Senate Republicans tasked with leading the party's 52 senators across the finish line.

Both represent states that opted to expand the program. But Mr. Portman is considered to largely share the perspective of his governor, John Kasich, a Republican who fought to extend Medicaid eligibility in Ohio over objections from others in his party and doesn't want deep funding cuts. Mr. Toomey, by contrast, is a budget hawk who backs deeper Medicaid cuts typically favored by Republicans from the many states that didn't expand their programs.

Mr. Toomey has said he wants to slow the growth rate of Medicaid spending per beneficiary by tying new federal funding caps to the consumer-price index, which is 2.4% this year, according to the CBO. That would be 2 percentage points less than CBO's projected annual 4.4% growth rate, shifting more responsibility to the states to pick up the tab.

Other GOP senators said they would not be able to say whether they support the bill until they know the exact formula that will be used to determine Medicaid funding.

"Until they determine the growth rate on Medicaid, we can't make that determination," said Sen. Dean Heller, a Republican up for re-election in Nevada next year. "The big print giveth, the small print taketh away."

Some conservative strategists said the best course for a deal on Medicaid is to restrict federal funding to a set amount for each

person enrolled but allow states to retain more generous eligibility rules for a longer period. Such a proposal could represent a net win for states that opted not to expand the program, while allowing states that did to figure out how to offer coverage for people who qualify according to the standards they want to set.

Another concept being discussed is cutting off federal Medicaid funding for people with incomes above the poverty level, and moving those people into subsidized private-insurance plans, people familiar with the conversations said. That idea is being promoted by Mr. Kasich, although it is unlikely to appease the more stringent advocates of

cutting federal spending on Medicaid.

Senate aides spent last week hammering out potential drafts of legislation that could be sent by Friday or early next week to the CBO, which would produce an analysis of its financial and coverage effects. The CBO estimated that the House-passed health bill would leave 23 million more people uninsured while reducing the cumulative federal deficit by \$119 billion in the next decade, compared with current law.

The White House legislative-affairs director, Marc Short, said Monday night that the administration expected the Senate to focus on health care throughout the summer, with the main activity taking place in

June and July. The White House expected Congress would succeed in passing a new health law before the year is out, he said.

Mr. Short played down suggestions that the Senate would undertake a substantial overhaul of the House bill, saying that he had worked on both sides of the Hill and had seen both chambers receive legislation from the other side that they had initially imagined rewriting but opted not to.

Meanwhile, Senate Republicans dodged one obstacle Tuesday when the chamber's parliamentarian ruled that nothing in the House health bill would cause it to lose its special procedural status in the Senate. That enables the bill to clear the chamber with a simple majority,

rather than the 60 votes needed for most legislation. But the parliamentarian has yet to decide whether all of the House bill's provisions comply with the Senate's complex procedural rules—some may have to be stripped out later.

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**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL.**

Editorial : The Senate's Medicaid Moment

June 6, 2017
7:19 p.m. ET 127 COMMENTS

5-6 minutes

Senate Republicans are struggling to agree on health reform, and the biggest divide concerns Medicaid. The problem is that too many seem to accept the liberal line that reform inevitably means kicking Americans off government coverage.

This narrative serves the liberal goal of scaring the public to preserve ObamaCare, but center-right and even liberal states have spent more than a decade improving a program originally meant for poor women and children and the disabled. Even as ObamaCare changed Medicaid and exploded enrollment, these reforms are working, and the House bill is designed to encourage other states to follow.

The modern era of Medicaid reform began in 2007, when Governor Mitch Daniels signed the Healthy Indiana Plan that introduced consumer-directed insurance options, including Health Savings Accounts (HSAs). Two years later, Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri applied for a Medicaid block grant that gives states a fixed sum of money in return for Washington's regulatory forbearance. Both programs were designed to improve the incentives to manage costs and increase upward mobility so fewer people need Medicaid.

Over the first three years, the Rhode Island waiver saved some \$100 million in local funds and overall spending fell about \$3 billion below the \$12 billion cap. The fixed federal spending limit encouraged the state to innovate, such as reducing hospital admissions for chronic diseases or transitioning the frail elderly to community care from nursing homes.

The waiver has continued to pay dividends under Democratic Governor Gina Raimondo. Despite joining ObamaCare's Medicaid expansion, Rhode Island has held "per member, per month" spending—the category of block grant adopted by the House—to a minus-0.5% trend over the last five years without cutting eligibility or services. Notably, that measure excludes patients added under Medicaid's ObamaCare expansion, who tend to be healthier and thus require less spending than the typical enrollee. Overall per member, per month costs are falling 2.5% a year.

Block grants are now even routine in none other than Andrew Cuomo's New York. After a scandal where federal investigators concluded the state had systematically manipulated Medicaid payment formulas to generate federal payola for more than two decades, the Democratic Governor agreed in 2014 to a waiver that caps "global" spending at the growth rate of long-term health-care inflation (3.6%).

There is some early evidence that the Empire State has started to control waste, fraud and abuse as a result, and hopefully so. New York still spends 54% more per enrollee than the national average.

Meanwhile, Governor Mike Pence, Mr. Daniels's Hoosier State successor, updated the Healthy Indiana Plan with a reform called HIP 2.0 in 2015. His architect was Seema Verma, who now administers Medicaid nationally. Their insight was that able-bodied, working-age adults living near the poverty line need a different type of coverage than do Medicaid's most vulnerable beneficiaries.

In other words, potential workers with earning capacity are better served by a temporary safety net than by a permanent open-ended entitlement. HIP 2.0 familiarizes members with basic commercial insurance practices like paying a monthly premium. To enroll in plans with a \$2,500 deductible and better benefits and quality than basic Medicaid, like dental coverage, they are required to pay 2% of income to an HSA. The first \$2,500 is picked up by the state, the money rolls over, and unused consumer contributions are refunded pro rata when they leave HIP 2.0.

According to an audit by the Lewin Group, 70% of Hoosiers in HIP 2.0 make regular contributions—85% of them below poverty, which means they recognize the value. If enrollees fall behind, they are bounced back to basic Medicaid.

HIP 2.0 is paired with skills-training, job search and career counselors to help people move from public assistance to the workplace.

This reform honor roll could continue: the 21 states that have moved more than 75% of all beneficiaries to managed care, Colorado's pediatric "medical homes" program, Texas's Medicaid waiver to devolve control to localities from the Austin bureaucracy. But liberals and the media ignore this progress as they try to frighten the GOP into doing nothing.

They also ignore that some 600,000 Americans with disabilities, brain injuries and mental illness are now in purgatory on state Medicaid waiting lists, and they compete with new Medicaid's able-bodied adults for scarce resources. Better to prioritize the truly needy while promoting other goals like health outcomes or labor force attachment.

The political reality is that Republicans won't get a better chance to reform an entitlement if they muff this one. ObamaCare is imploding, with Anthem saying Tuesday it will leave 18 counties in Ohio next year. Senate Republicans need to settle their differences or prepare to get run out of town.

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**The
Washington
Post**

In the 'Paris of the Appalachians,' they're not buying Trump's climate talk (UNE)

By Todd C. Frankel

10-12 minutes

PITTSBURGH — The mayor needed a break, and now he had a

cold beer and a shot of whiskey on the table in front of him. His Penguins cap was pulled low. His

dress shirt was untucked. Bill Peduto was tired after days of firing off defiant tweets, issuing city

proclamations and running to speak at rallies and give interviews to media from around the world — generally fighting back with everything he had after President Trump justified pulling the United States out of the Paris climate-change pact by saying at the White House late last week, “I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris.”

“He was saying, ‘Oh poor Pittsburgh, look at the trouble they’re in,’” Peduto said now, sipping his beer. “But that’s not Pittsburgh.”

Peduto, 52, a Democrat, sat inside a small bar called Cappy’s, his eyes locked on a large-screen TV. He, along with just about everyone else in this southwestern Pennsylvanian city, was watching the Pittsburgh Penguins play in the Stanley Cup hockey finals Saturday. He was surrounded by friends. Some had grown up here, like he did, and remembered what the city had once been like, when the steel mills were closing. Others had arrived more recently, as Pittsburgh reinvented itself into a hot spot of technology and medicine, where Uber tests its driverless cars, Google employs hundreds of workers and its hospitals are among the best at organ transplants.

Evening Edition newsletter

The day’s most important stories.

While that one sentence in Trump’s speech might have been just an applause line, a rhetorical flourish quickly forgotten in national political circles, it continues to resonate here. Trump was widely criticized for his nod to Pittsburgh because it’s a solid blue dot in a regional sea of red. Hillary Clinton got 75 percent of the city’s vote in the presidential election. But his comment also revealed a deeper misunderstanding about which regions are flourishing in the new economy and how they got there.

And it’s an argument that could be revisited this week, as Trump is expected to attend Thursday’s opening of a new coal mine about 60 miles east of Pittsburgh, a visit that the president hinted at in last week’s speech. “They asked me if I’d go,” Trump said. “I’m going to try.”

President Trump announced on June 1 that the United States will withdraw from the Paris climate agreement. President Trump announced on June 1 that the United States will withdraw from the Paris climate agreement. (Reuters)

(Reuters)

Many people in Pittsburgh, from retirees to steelworkers to students,

said they viewed the Paris deal — which calls for countries to meet voluntary goals for reducing emissions — as an opportunity for the city, especially in a place that once was so smoggy that streetlights sometimes were needed during the day in the 1940s. The move to greener technology would mean retrofitting buildings to make them more efficient, providing the raw materials for wind turbines and helping develop driverless taxis, to which the city gave a green light last year.

That’s what got Peduto so mad. Having experienced the rise and fall of the steel industry, Pittsburgh already knew that trying to hold on to its past was futile.

“Time only goes one way,” Peduto said, walking down the street outside the bar during an intermission in the hockey game.

[‘Coal country is a great place to be from.’ But does the future match Trump’s optimism?]

Where the city’s steel mills once stood, there are shopping centers and mixed-use developments. Its last mill closed in 1999.

That property is now home to Uber’s autonomous-driving test track and a fledgling autonomous-car-manufacturing center. Companies working on driverless car technology have pledged to spend \$3 billion in Pittsburgh over five years, Peduto said. And those projects would be helped by the Paris deal.

The news that Trump intended to drop out of the Paris pact and his pithy line about Pittsburgh shot across the city.

A group of President Trump supporters celebrated his decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate deal with a rally near the White House. A group of President Trump supporters celebrated his decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate deal with a rally near the White House. (AP)

(AP)

“You could almost hear the jaws drop across the geographic area,” said Jerry Shuster, a political communications professor at the University of Pittsburgh. “I don’t know what he was trying to do except irritate Pittsburgh.”

“I guess the alliteration was too good to pass up,” said Bill Flanagan of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development.

“He must’ve been talking about Pittsburg, Kansas,” said Tom Papadakos, an attorney.

Leo Gerard, head of United Steelworkers, was in his office on the 12th floor of a downtown building when he heard Trump’s reference. He said that his union — which represents many of the 100,000 American steelworkers — supports the Paris deal. He saw it as a missed opportunity. You need lots of steel to build a wind turbine, he said, disagreeing with Trump’s sentiment.

Peduto was in his office when Trump made his announcement. He turned to the president’s favorite communication medium and started tweeting himself, shooting off a volley of messages. When White House press secretary Sean Spicer shared a quote from the speech, Peduto replied, “As the Mayor of Pittsburgh, I can assure you that we will follow the guidelines of the Paris agreement for our people, our economy & future.”

It was the start of a pattern that would play out in the coming days — mayors and corporate leaders pledging to follow the Paris accord, even if the federal government would not.

Peduto issued a proclamation calling for Pittsburgh to meet ambitious targets for carbon-emission reductions. His small communications staff struggled to keep up with the interview requests pouring in from around the world. He ordered City Hall to be illuminated by green lights at night to show the city’s support for the Paris deal. He stopped by a March for Truth rally downtown over the weekend, telling the crowd: “Pittsburgh is a shining example of what the Paris Agreement is all about.”

Peduto was defiant.

But the world just outside Pittsburgh — in the rural counties that voted for Trump — is different.

“It’s like Alabama or Mississippi, it’s so conservative,” said George Dethlefsen, chief executive of Corsa Coal, which is opening that new coal mine this week in Somerset County, where Trump got 76 percent of the vote.

Trump did make a campaign stop in Pittsburgh last June. He spoke at the Lawrence Convention Center downtown, named for the Pittsburgh mayor credited with leading the campaign that cleaned up the city’s polluted air in the 1940s and ’50s. Trump mentioned his “friend,” Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger. But it was mostly a typical stump speech, with chants of “Build the Wall,” accusations that the Chinese were dumping steel, and calling the media “terrible

human beings.” He didn’t talk about global warming or the Paris pact.

Pittsburgh is not the only Pennsylvania city slighted by a Trump characterization. On the campaign trail last year, he described Harrisburg as “a war zone.” That chafed some residents of the relatively prosperous state capital, who speculated that Trump must have gotten the idea from looking out his plane as he landed at the airport and saw an old, unsightly — but still operational — steel mill along the river.

But if Trump or his speechwriters were looking for a major city to use instead of Pittsburgh, it would have been tough. Clinton won 36 of the 39 largest U.S. cities, according to pollsters, crystallizing the rural vs. urban divide that seemed to define the 2016 election.

Pittsburgh, a city of 305,000, is known as Steel City or the City of Bridges. It once was known as the City of Smoke or “Hell With the Lid Off” before the pollution was controlled.

“Do you remember when it smelled like rotten eggs in the air and you had to wipe the black off your car? The rivers were black,” recalled Aldo DeSarro, 66, outside the La Prima Espresso shop in a warehouse district booming with visitors. “It’s a lot better now.”

Pittsburgh is also sometimes called the Paris of the Appalachians, as it has long served as the cultural heart of the mountainous region. Becky O’Connor recalled the nickname. She was leaving an afternoon showing of “An American in Paris,” the Gershwin musical, at the Benedum Center downtown. A registered Republican but not a Trump fan, she said she was unsure about whether pulling out of the Paris deal was the right move. But she was stunned by Trump’s comment about the city.

“It really shows he doesn’t understand Pittsburgh,” she said.

Back at Cappy’s bar, the Penguins scored early in Game 3 and the bar erupted into an elated roar, even though the home team would go on to lose this one.

“Welcome to the Rust Belt, baby!” one of the men sitting with Peduto shouted at the TV screen.

It was a purely Pittsburgh moment — both small town and big city. One of the biggest differences over the years was the type of people sitting with the mayor. Two were attorneys. One was an engineer. One taught at the University of Pittsburgh and led a top-notch physical-rehabilitation program. Another headed up a small life-sciences firm

working on a better method for treating wounds.

Outside during a break in Saturday's game, Peduto recalled how his dad would drive him when he was a young boy to see the city's fire-breathing smokestacks at night. "It was like 'The

Wizard of Oz,'" he said. When he got older in the '80s, he and many of his friends had to leave town to find work as the steel industry collapsed. But then Pittsburgh stopped trying to hold on to the past. Today, a hospital system is the leading employer. Technology

jobs are booming. People are moving back into the city. One small neighborhood, Lawrenceville, is known as Pittsburgh's Brooklyn for its density of hipsters. The city's transformation took 30 years, Peduto said. And who knows if it will hold.

"But what's not going to happen is that our past is going to be the path for our future," he said.

Then he headed back to the bar. He wanted to catch the end of the game.

The New York Times

Editorial : States and Cities Compensate for Mr. Trump's Climate Stupidity

The Editorial Board

5-6 minutes

Tom Haugomat

President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris compact on climate change was barely four days old when more than 1,200 governors, mayors and businesses promised to do whatever they could to help the United States meet the climate goals President Barack Obama had committed to in the agreement. In a letter, titled "We Are Still In," they declared that global warming imposes real and rising costs, while the clean energy economy to which the Paris agreement aspires presents enormous opportunities for American businesses and workers.

The statement was further evidence that Mr. Trump, as polls have shown, is out of touch with the American people. Yet this question remains: Can the United States meet its commitments without federal involvement? To many analysts, it's a hopeless task: Mr. Trump has not only removed America from a leadership role in the climate fight. He has also ordered his minions to kill or weaken beyond recognition every federal initiative

on which Mr. Obama had based his pledge.

It would be unwise, however, to give in to pessimism.

Some context: The Paris agreement committed more than 190 nations to a collective effort to limit the rise in global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit, above pre-industrial temperatures. To that end, Mr. Obama promised to lower America's greenhouse gas emissions 26 percent to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025. That pledge was crucial to the overall goal; according to the think tank Climate Interactive, Mr. Obama's ambitious promise would account for one-fifth of the hoped-for global emissions reduction out to the year 2030.

Here's the good news: Thanks to market forces (chiefly the shift from dirty coal to cleaner natural gas); increased use of wind and solar power; more efficient vehicles, buildings and appliances; and aggressive state and local policies, emissions have already dropped about 12 percent from 2005 levels, more than 40 percent of Mr. Obama's target. Further progress along these lines, without any new federal policies, would get us to a total emissions reduction of 15

percent to 19 percent by 2025, according to the Rhodium Group — way short of Mr. Obama's pledge. But if we could add back in the Obama initiatives — for instance, the mandatory shutdown of all old coal-fired power plants, which are rules Mr. Trump wants to kill — we'd get to 23 percent, which is much closer.

Mr. Trump, in short, has left a hole to fill. How to do it?

There are several pathways. First, state action: 29 states plus the District of Columbia have targets for how much of their electricity should come from renewable or alternative energy sources, and nine others have voluntary standards. Maryland and Michigan recently raised their targets. The nation's most populous state, California, is also its most ambitious. It is on track to get 33 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2020 and 50 percent by 2030. It also has a cap-and-trade system to put a price on emissions; Quebec is part of that system and Ontario will soon join. Other states ought to join that system, too.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York and Gov. Jay Inslee of Washington have also set aggressive targets. Even red states like Iowa, Kansas and Texas have found that it makes

economic sense to switch from coal to nonpolluting sources like wind, in part because costs of renewables have dropped sharply. Tucson Electric Power, an Arizona utility, recently announced that it would buy power from a solar farm for less than 3 cents a kilowatt-hour, which is less than half of what it paid in recent years. Experts say that price is comparable to the cost of power from plants fueled by natural gas. Utilities in North Carolina, Michigan and elsewhere plan to close coal-fired power plants.

Cities will also play a big role. New York and others are working to increase energy efficiency by updating building codes. They can also reduce emissions while improving public health by investing more in mass transit and electric vehicle charging stations. Businesses like Apple and Google say they intend to get all or nearly all of their energy from renewable sources. And who knows where electric vehicles will take us?

In 2008, the government projected that carbon emissions from power plants, industry, transportation and buildings would grow about 1 percent a year. Instead, they fell. Progress is possible, even with Mr. Trump standing in the way.

The New York Times

Bossert: Congress Must Reauthorize Foreign Surveillance

Thomas P. Bossert

6-7 minutes

Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas proposed a bill on Tuesday to permanently reauthorize Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Jacquelyn Martin/Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress will hear testimony on Wednesday on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, part of which is set to expire at the end of the year. It will be debating the fate of an authority — the FISA Amendments Act — that has helped thwart terrorist attacks around the world.

The most important section under consideration, Section 702, allows a federal court to approve and supervise, under specific conditions, the collection of information on foreign persons, in foreign countries, who happen to use American communications services and internet technology. The authority has existed and Congress has reauthorized it under two administrations.

Congress created Section 702 authority to address an intelligence-collection gap that resulted from the evolution of technology in the years after FISA became law in 1978. This gap allowed foreign terrorists to benefit from the legal protections enjoyed by American citizens. On Tuesday, Senator Tom Cotton, Republican of Arkansas, proposed

a bill to permanently reauthorize Section 702 without modification. The Trump administration supports his bill, without condition.

While there are many examples of the value of this tool, they are likely to remain classified for years to preserve our national security. But in one instance that is public, intelligence collected under Section 702 helped prevent Al Qaeda's Najibullah Zazi from conducting a suicide bombing on the New York City subway. Simply put, the use of this authority has helped save lives.

Yet there are two serious misconceptions about what Section 702 permits the government to do that threaten the reauthorization.

First, it does not permit the targeting of Americans. The authority

expressly forbids intentional targeting of a United States person for surveillance. Electronic surveillance of Americans, or even foreigners inside the United States, requires an individual court order supported by probable cause.

Second, it does not permit backdoor targeting of Americans, whose communications with foreign persons can be incidentally captured in the process. National security officials may use search terms or identifiers associated with Americans, such as an email address, to query the information lawfully acquired using Section 702 authority.

But this does not entail the collection or search of any new information, and the practice has

been upheld by the FISA court and all other federal courts that have considered this issue. It is also consistent with the long history of our legal system. Imposing a warrant requirement to conduct such data queries, as some in Congress have proposed, would be legally unnecessary and a step toward re-erecting pre-9/11 barriers to our ability to identify foreign terrorists and their contacts.

Over nearly a decade of rigorous oversight, no intentional abuse of the Section 702 authority has ever been identified, and the government has quickly taken action to rectify unintentional mistakes. The Section 702 authority has enabled actionable warnings of violent attacks and the collection of information about weapons proliferators and cyberhackers. And it has revealed other threats to our nation's security.

Nevertheless, any surveillance authority is powerful and must be exercised with prudence and care. Congress engineered Section 702 with substantial constraints, and it is implemented with rigorous oversight by all three branches of our government. The government's internal training, oversight, technology and inspector-general regime, along with oversight by the Department of Justice, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board — which deserves special praise — and Congress, all ensure that the government uses these important authorities properly.

Safeguarding our nation consists of not only protecting us from threats abroad, but also ensuring we have the appropriate balance of security and privacy in the tools the government uses. There are indeed

legitimate privacy concerns with any surveillance, but the significant statutory and oversight protocols address those concerns.

Under President Barack Obama, the National Security Agency used the authority more broadly to acquire internet communications about foreign intelligence targets. Under President Trump's leadership, we have refined the application of this authority to target only those internet communications sent directly to or from a lawful foreign intelligence target. This smart choice will reduce incidental collection on Americans without sacrificing our security. We proposed, and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court approved, the new procedures, which achieve this goal and protect Americans' privacy.

Cabinet officials and security professionals from different

agencies will testify on this matter on Wednesday. President Trump stands with them 100 percent on the need for permanent reauthorization of Section 702. Officials from the past two administrations also agree that we cannot have a blind spot in our defenses simply because a foreign terrorist on foreign land chooses an American email provider.

We cannot allow adversaries abroad to cloak themselves in the legal protections we extend to Americans. And Section 702 is one of the most effective tools for identifying and preventing threats. Congress should do its part to make America safe again and leave the politics of distraction for another day.

Los Angeles Times

Editorial : Trump obsesses over terrorism but ignores the bigger threat: Access to firearms

The Times
Editorial Board
5-6 minutes

It's been a bloody 11 days. Since May 27, at least 28 people have been shot dead across the country and another 47 wounded in 13 separate mass shootings, defined as confrontations in which at least four people are shot in one incident. The violence included a rampage in Mississippi late last week in which a man who told a reporter he was trying to commit "suicide by cop" killed seven relatives and one police officer before being captured. On Monday, a disgruntled former employee walked into a job site in Orlando, Fla., and killed five former co-workers before turning the gun on himself. Yet those U.S. killings barely caused a ripple in the public consciousness.

One reason is all the attention being paid to acts of political terrorism. And of course terrorism of the sort that occurred in London and Manchester, England, recently — and in San Bernardino, Paris, Madrid and New York and elsewhere in recent years — is a very significant concern that requires extraordinary vigilance, close scrutiny

and effective, preventive countermeasures. But the cold, hard reality is that the most pressing risk to American lives comes not from Islamic State, but lies here at home, among ourselves and our obscenely large arsenal of firearms. In fact, it is the commonness and ordinariness of gun violence that is so chilling. An analysis of statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows an average of 33,880 annual deaths involving firearms from 2011-2015. Of those, 11,564 were homicides, or an average of about 32 homicides and 58 suicides a day, every day, over five years.

That's an astounding level of carnage. A CNN analysis last year found that for every American killed by an act of terror in the United States or abroad in 2014, more than 1,049 died because of guns.

Fortunately, the nation's murder rate (including non-negligent homicide) has dropped from 8.2 per 100,000 in 1995 to a low of 4.5 in 2013 and 2014, before increasing to 4.9 in 2015 (the rate for 2016 has not yet been calculated). That recent uptick is something that law-enforcement and criminal policy experts need to address. But while it's good news that we aren't killing each other as often as we used to,

we're still committing acts of violence at levels unseen in any other industrialized, developed society. And then there are the accidental shootings. And those who are shot and survive but are left physically and mentally maimed — nearly 68,000 victims nationwide in 2015 alone, according to CDC data.

The Trump administration seems uninterested in the very obvious and omnipresent threat to Americans — our easy access to firearms. Trump ran for president with the early and full-throated support of the National Rifle Assn., which continues to press a national agenda to get more guns in the hands of more people with as few restrictions as possible. Trump, notably, has hosted Wayne LaPierre, the NRA's most visible leader, at the White House, and in April addressed the NRA's annual convention, at which he said, "You have a true friend and champion in the White House."

That is very bad news for the safety of the nation. But perhaps even more chilling is that a man can allegedly kill eight people, including a police officer, and not rivet the nation's attention. We must stay focused on the persistent and deeply challenging problem of too many guns, and too many people

with too easy access to them. Studies have found that states with tighter gun control laws tend to have fewer gun-related deaths, and that the presence of a gun in a home increases the chances someone in the home will be a victim of homicide or suicide.

The Supreme Court is weighing whether to hear an appeal of a San Diego case called *Peruta vs. County of San Diego*, in which the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court's decision that the 2nd Amendment does not confer a right to carry a concealed weapon outside the home. Letting that decision stand would be a positive step. Citizens can't really lobby the Supreme Court, but here's something they can do: Lobby Congress to drop the de facto ban on the CDC from conducting research into gun violence, and press federal and state elected officials to adopt sensible gun control laws that put public safety ahead of the gun-lobby's absolutist view of the 2nd Amendment. If Trump and other elected officials won't take seriously their responsibility to ensure public safety through better and smarter gun policies, then voters need to hold them accountable.

The Washington Post

Editorial : On appointments, Trump is his own biggest obstructionist

<https://www.facebook.com/washingtonpostopinions>
gtonpostopinions
4-5 minutes

The Post's View
Opinion

Opinion A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).
By Editorial Board

The Post's View
Opinion

Opinion A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

June 6 at 7:40 PM

PRESIDENT TRUMP sounded a bit like other newly arrived presidents on Monday when he complained on Twitter that Congress is holding up his appointments. "Dems are taking forever to approve my people, including Ambassadors. They are nothing but OBSTRUCTIONISTS! Want approvals," he wrote. But if Mr. Trump really wants to understand the problem, he does not need to look all the way down Pennsylvania Avenue.

The fact is that while the Republican-controlled Senate is lagging, the main problem is that Mr. Trump is not nominating candidates for positions and has fallen seriously behind in staffing

the government's top ranks. According to the nonpartisan White House Transition Project, which has studied historical trends and uses several different metrics, Mr. Trump's performance is the slowest in four decades on nominations, confirmations and standing up the critical leadership needed to run the country. At this point, the project reported, most administrations would have filled about 38 percent of the most critical positions in the government, but Mr. Trump has completed only about 14 percent. To see where the problem lies, look at the tracker maintained by The Post and the Partnership for Public Service, which shows that of 559 key positions requiring Senate confirmation, Mr. Trump has provided no nominee for 441, while 15 are awaiting nomination, 63 are formally nominated and 40 are

confirmed. The biggest obstructionist is Mr. Trump.

For the relative few he has nominated, if Mr. Trump is so impatient with the Senate confirmation process, he should take it up with the members of his party who control the chamber. The White House Transition Project says the Senate has confirmed slightly less than half of Mr. Trump's nominees. If there is dysfunction or delay, it is disingenuous to always point the finger at "Dems."

Politics newsletter

The big stories and commentary shaping the day.

Politics aside, the U.S. government today is hollowed out in the executive service, and this could prove a serious disadvantage in a crisis. Mr. Trump fired the director of the FBI but hasn't come up with a

replacement for James B. Comey. There is currently no presidentially appointed director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a bulwark against pandemic, nor a nominee for the assistant secretary of health and human services for preparedness and response, a key position to manage something such as another influenza outbreak. There are no U.S. attorneys to replace those forced out by Mr. Trump. Also alarming, Mr. Trump has yet to nominate a single assistant secretary of state for any region around the world, leaving in place acting officials who don't have the sway of presidential appointees.

By placing a premium on loyalty, Mr. Trump from the start excluded many skilled and talented people from serving. He clearly has not made it a priority to catch up.



Milbank: 'President Pence' is sounding better and better

<https://www.facebook.com/danamilbank>

5-7 minutes

President Trump, on his recent European trip, literally shoved aside Prime Minister Dusko Markovic of Montenegro in order to get to the front of a group of leaders. On Monday, Vice President Pence hosted the shoving victim at the White House, then praised Markovic publicly.

"I had the privilege of welcoming the prime minister to the White House today," Pence said at an Atlantic Council dinner. "I was very humbled to be able to share a few moments with him on the very day that Montenegro became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

On that same European trip, Trump surprised his own aides and unsettled allies when he refused to affirm NATO's collective-defense obligations. On Monday night, Pence expressed his "unwavering" support: "The United States is resolved, as we were at NATO's founding and in every hour since, to live by that principle that an attack on one of us is an attack on us all."

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The best conversations on The Washington Post

John Nance Garner, one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's vice presidents, famously compared the office to "a bucket of warm piss." For Pence,

the vice presidency is a bucket of Clorox and a mop.

Tuesday morning found the vice president doing what he does frequently these days: cleaning up Trump's messes. Pence, speaking at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, offered a soothing contrast to Trump's recent outbursts.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan went on to say that he still does not think President Trump's upcoming state visit to the U.K. is appropriate. London Mayor Sadiq Khan says he "doesn't care" about Donald Trump's tweets (The Washington Post)

(The Washington Post)

Where Trump alienated allies and opened a dispute with the mayor of London, Pence vowed to "continue to stand with our allies" and praised "our cherished ally," Britain. Where Trump has largely removed human rights from the agenda, Pence called for "an America standing tall in the world again for our values and our ideals." Where Trump has stoked anti-Muslim sentiment, Pence asserted that under Trump, "America will continue to condemn persecution of any faith at any place at any time."

Trump, at the National Prayer Breakfast earlier this year, told attendees to pray for Arnold Schwarzenegger and his "Apprentice" ratings. Pence aimed higher. "Don't so much pray for a cause as for country," he said, paraphrasing Abraham Lincoln. "Just pray for America."

Amen.

The contrast between the reckless president and his responsible understudy has me thinking, not for the first time, how much better things would be if Pence were president. Trump shows no ability to correct course, to pull himself out of a self-destructive spiral. It may be premature to talk of impeachment or resignation, but Trump's path is unsustainable. Republicans in Congress would be sensible to start thinking about an endgame, and the former Indiana governor may be the their best hope — and all of ours.

Many liberals correctly call Pence a doctrinaire conservative, particularly on gay rights and other social issues. He'll be forever tarnished because of his role in legitimizing Trump for mainstream conservatives, a calculation based on the vain hope that he could influence Trump. He has embarrassed himself in office by parroting Trump's untruths and cheerleading for the boss.

But Pence is, at core, a small-d democrat, not a demagogue. The world would be safer with him in charge. We would still have fierce divisions about the nation's direction. But Pence, in the nearly two decades I've known him, has been an honorable man. Opponents can disagree with him yet sleep well knowing he's unlikely to be irrational.

This was supposed to have been "infrastructure week" for Trump, but he has been using his Twitter account to impair further the infrastructure of his presidency: burning bridges, building bunkers and going off the rails. He has vented unfiltered rage at the courts,

the media, the mayor of London, Qatar and his own administration.

Meanwhile, Pence governs. He visited Capitol Hill on Tuesday to have a luncheon talk with GOP senators about health-care reform. He hosted female entrepreneurs at the White House on Monday and said seven words to them that likely never passed his boss's lips: "I'm here to listen, not to talk."

At the Atlantic Council dinner, he gave a statesmanlike response to the London attacks that contrasted dramatically with Trump's. Pence lavishly praised the late Carter administration national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski. He repeatedly hailed NATO and European allies. He criticized Russian expansionism. He was diplomatic about areas of disagreement with Europe.

Trump could not have given that speech, nor the one Pence gave at the Catholic Prayer Breakfast, asking for prayers to heal a divided country — at almost the exact moment Trump was railing on Twitter about fake news and political correctness. Pence urged the Catholics to "continue to be the hands and feet of our Savior, reaching in with love and compassion, embracing the dignity of all people of every background and every experience."

A noble — even presidential — aspiration. Under Trump we don't have a prayer.

Twitter: @Milbank

Sosnik : I advised Bill Clinton. Here's how Trump should manage his crises.

By Doug Sosnik

5-6 minutes

By Doug Sosnik June 6 at 7:43 PM

Doug Sosnik, a Democratic political strategist, was a senior adviser to President Bill Clinton from 1994 to 2000.

The nonstop coverage of the Trump administration's efforts to manage multiplying investigations takes me back 20 years, to the time I served as senior adviser in the Clinton White House — an administration that was no stranger to political controversy.

My lesson from those days: Trump and his advisers are in way over their heads and unprepared for what awaits them. Fired FBI director James B. Comey's appearance before the Senate Intelligence Committee is the opening salvo of a series of investigations likely to continue past Trump's presidency.

Historically, an embattled president's ability to survive depends on maintaining the support of the public and his party. When Richard Nixon lost the country's confidence, he lost his party's leadership and many rank-and-file Republicans. His fate was sealed.

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The best conversations on The Washington Post

Bill Clinton was in a far stronger position when he faced a similar

threat. Clinton's poll ratings during impeachment remained as high as at any preceding point in office. The booming economy and a strong belief that the country was heading in the right direction provided a powerful well of support.

Trump now faces the same imperative. But his ability to secure the necessary support is complicated by having assumed office with the lowest level of popularity in modern history. Given that preexisting deficit of goodwill and the circumstantial evidence that continues to build against him, the electorate will be disinclined to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Trump may be able to keep the backing of his base until the midterm elections next year, but that may not be enough. If Republicans lose control of the House, the party may begin to have second thoughts about sticking with the president.

Meanwhile, the culture surrounding Trump and his administration's failure to focus on the fundamentals of governing make his position especially vulnerable.

First, the seriousness of the charges Trump faces dwarfs anything since Watergate. The most damaging threats to Clinton's presidency were linked to his personal behavior — not official responsibilities. If it is proved that Trump's campaign directly or indirectly colluded with the Russians, his presidency could be permanently derailed. It's not hard

to see why Trump has been obsessed with insisting that he won the election fair and square.

Second, Trump faces a three-front war involving conduct during the campaign, the transition and his presidency. At the root of many of Trump's problems is his team's failure to plan for taking power, establish effective administrative structures or create operating rules of the road. This is due in part to Trump's resistance to planning and structure, as well as his campaign's misplaced assumption that he would lose the election. Even after victory, his advisers failed to grasp the new realities of what it meant to work in government and the legal limitations they faced during the transition.

Third, the current Trump operation is hobbled by a dysfunctional team that lacks governing experience, as well as the discipline and judgment to respond to continuous crises. There is no evidence the staff can effectively influence a president who seems incapable of maintaining the personal discipline or self-control required by the office.

In contrast, the Clinton White House faced the height of its investigations during the second term, when it had a highly functioning group of operatives with experience in a crisis environment. From the start, they established a separate and walled-off crisis management team to deal with the onslaught on a minute-by-minute basis.

Fourth, and potentially the most dangerous to the people in Trump world, is a transactional culture rooted in high-dollar dealmaking, where rules and ethics are often optional. That culture fit Trump's needs well for many years. But it is unacceptable in government service, as Trump & Co. are discovering to their dismay.

Fifth, during the campaign and transition, the world of Trump remained a spider web of dealmakers whose mission was to expand the family's fortune, and perhaps their own. Anyone who played in this environment is now legally vulnerable.

Finally, the Trump administration has yet to understand how the campaign investigation is likely to be the gateway to the inner workings of the Trump empire.

The Watergate and Clinton investigations offer examples of how an initial inquiry can mushroom. Ultimately, many of the Watergate convictions had little to do with the actual break-ins at the Democratic National Committee. Likewise, Kenneth Starr and his team spent years and more than \$70 million pursuing Clinton in an investigation that far exceeded the scope of his appointment.

The Comey hearing presents the next big test for Trump. His response will either accelerate the downward spiral or signal the administration's effort to reboot and increase its odds of survival.



Lieberman: This group's bringing common sense to Congress

By Joe Lieberman

views expressed in this commentary are solely his.

Updated 7:56 AM ET, Wed June 7, 2017

Turmoil stalls Trump's presidency 01:59

Story highlights

- Joe Lieberman: We must address Washington's partisan paralysis
- This breakdown can be fixed -- history tells us so, he says

Joe Lieberman is a former US senator from Connecticut and was the Democratic nominee for vice president in 2000. He is a national co-chairman of No Labels, a group dedicated to ending partisan gridlock and establishing a new politics of problem solving. The

(CNN)While Washington fiddles, the American people are angry. While our elected officials descend further into frenzies of partisanship, voters feel left out. Their kitchen table concerns are repeatedly ignored, forcing many families to face the twin economic disruptions of globalization and the advance of technology on their own.

Joe Lieberman

Enough already. Washington has to get down to business. Our health care system needs reform; our infrastructure is out of date; we are underemployed and undereducated for the new jobs of today and tomorrow; economic growth is weak; debt is skyrocketing; murder rates in cities are rising; and the world is in turmoil with rogue states

such as North Korea growing their arsenals.

But Congress is paralyzed. Republicans can't even agree with other Republicans. And for the most part, Democrats have endorsed a deliberate strategy of gridlock and resistance. Washington is perpetually engulfed by anonymous leaks and diversions. The end result is that the people's business has taken a permanent back seat to politics and division.

Now, more than ever, we have to recognize the importance of bipartisan action. Every major political reform in this country since the 1930s (with the exception of Obamacare) has been enacted with votes from Democrats and Republicans willing to compromise and work for the common good. That was true of the Civil Rights

Act, of Medicare and of welfare reform.

But in an era of partisan media, unchecked Internet trolling and ideological polarization, the Constitution's blueprint for balanced government has been lost in a political fog. Unlike the parliamentary systems that provide for one-party rule, our system is based on checks and balances. In other words, American democracy centers on the expectation that the two parties will resolve their differences to move the country forward.

Mark Meadows: How Russia hysteria paralyzes Congress

The underlying discontent of the voters is reflected in the polls. In the last Harvard-Harris poll, majorities disapproved of the actions of both parties. Who is winning this battle? No one. Each side is landing blows,

resulting in a weakened system with flagging public faith on both sides.

This breakdown can be fixed -- history tells us so. In our lifetimes, we saw President Ronald Reagan work with Speaker Tip O'Neill to reshape budget and tax policies. We saw President Bill Clinton work with Speaker Newt Gingrich to achieve a balanced budget. Despite vast differences, they worked to bridge disagreement to get things done for our country. Eighty-nine percent of the American people believe the two parties should put aside their disputes to find compromise to get things done. It's one of the few questions you can ask today that Democratic, Republican and independent



Editorial : Supreme Court, do the right thing

The Editorial Board , USA TODAY

4-5 minutes

Protesters place photos of refugees in rafts at the Trump Tower in New York in March 2017.(Photo: Drew Angerer, Getty Images)

A growing sense of futility pervades President Trump's effort to temporarily bar people from certain Muslim-majority nations from entering America. The travel ban was deeply flawed policy from day one, and since then several federal judges have rejected it as unconstitutional.

The administration now wants the Supreme Court to rule on the latest version of the plan, which was unveiled three months ago. If the justices choose to hear the case, the president might find a receptive conservative majority. But he undercut his chances this week by tweeting that the new version is a "watered down, politically correct" variation on the original from January.

Even in an area such as immigration, where presidents have wide discretion, Trump has managed to find



5-7 minutes

June 6, 2017 7:41 p.m. ET

A headline in Politico Monday read: " Trump national security team blindsided by NATO speech." If this report is correct, President Trump left his top team—national security adviser H.R. McMaster, Defense

voters answer in the same way. It is the right path forward for America.

By all means, Congress should carry out its function of investigating important matters such as Russian covert activities and the possible illegal unmasking and leaking of classified information. But these investigations cannot be allowed to take a car already moving at only 5 mph and grind it to a halt. I was there in the Senate in 1998 during the impeachment inquiry and trial of Bill Clinton, and we learned to investigate and legislate at the same time. We didn't stop what we were there to do -- we put progress over partisanship. It's an important lesson for today.

Fortunately, a glimmer of hope has emerged from inside Congress. A

barrier to his authority: First Amendment safeguards against religious discrimination. The latest version of Trump's executive order "speaks with vague words of national security, but in context drips with religious intolerance, animus and discrimination," Chief Judge Roger Gregory of the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals wrote in a May 25 ruling.

Trump's directive would ban entry into the USA for 90 days of people from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. It would also bar all refugees for 120 days.

This is strangely arbitrary. None of the 9/11 terrorists was from the six countries, and since that attack, no one has been killed in the USA by a terrorist from that group of nations. The executive order cited only one example — of a refugee who came from Somalia as a child and who was later sentenced for terrorism-related offenses.

OPPOSING VIEW:

Trump has been promoting the travel ban in the aftermath of the recent terrorist incidents in Great Britain. But last month's suicide bombing in Manchester and the attack at London's Westminster

group of 40 members of the House of Representatives, split evenly among the Democratic and Republican parties and organized and led by Reps. Tom Reed, R-New York, and Josh Gottheimer, D-New Jersey, have formed the Problem Solvers Caucus. Like so many ordinary Americans, they've had enough of the status quo. They're intent on forging substantive and bipartisan solutions to America's biggest problems, such as infrastructure and tax reform. They helped avert a government shutdown in April. They're working now to avert a debt ceiling debacle over the summer.

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Bridge in March were committed by native-born citizens. Among the three assailants in the stabbing attacks near London Bridge over the weekend, one was from Pakistan, another from Italy and the third's country of origin is as yet undisclosed.

Department of Homeland Security research found that immigrants from the six countries in Trump's travel ban pose no unique risk of becoming terrorists, and that "country of citizenship is unlikely to be a reliable indicator of potential terrorist activity."

The first version of the travel, sprung on the public a week after Trump was inaugurated, was executed so clumsily that it created confusion at the borders and chaos at the airports, even for some people legally eligible to enter the United States. Trump later tweeted that haste was crucial in order to keep "bad dudes" from rushing in before his travel ban took hold.

Haste is not a word typically associated with judicial review. The Supreme Court has ordered lawyers to file papers quickly — so the court can decide by the end of June whether to hear the case next fall. In the meantime, the Justice

The Problem Solvers are bringing a common-sense approach to the nation's toughest problems. It's time for the rest of Washington to catch up. When in power, neither party will win enduring victories without reaching across the aisle. When in opposition, neither party will leave an imprint if it resists every proposed initiative regardless of merit. Enough of the partisanship that only weakens our country and emboldens our adversaries. It's time for the nation's leaders to put country before ideology and party.

Department has asked the high court to issue an emergency ruling allowing the long-stalled ban to go forward pending any final decision on its constitutionality.

Rather than exerting so much effort on a travel ban of dubious utility and constitutionality, the Trump administration would do well to focus on defeating the Islamic State militarily in Iraq and Syria; using intelligence to detect and disrupt terror plots; and figuring out better ways to vet potentially dangerous people — from whatever country of origin.

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Galston: A Turning Point for Trumpinology

William A. Galston

Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson —in the dark regarding his May 25 speech at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization headquarters in Brussels. All three officials, Politico reports, believed the president's address would explicitly affirm his commitment to Article 5 of the NATO treaty, which states that an attack on one ally is an attack on all. Only when Mr. Trump began speaking did they realize he had removed the crucial

sentence, reportedly with encouragement from chief strategist Steve Bannon.

The article's author, Susan Glasser, remarks that the episode represents "a significant moment of rupture inside the Trump administration": The president withheld information from his top advisers and then forced them to offer "awkward, unconvincing, after-the-fact claims that the speech really did amount to

a commitment they knew it did not make."

I have talked with veteran national-security scholars and officials who regard this as a turning point in their assessment of the administration. Until now they believed Mr. Trump's experienced advisers would be able to run American foreign policy along more or less conventional postwar lines, even if the president's rhetoric veered from time to time in a nationalist direction.

They no longer believe this. Instead, they say, his modus operandi will be transactional. The true north of his compass points to Mr. Bannon's truculent, aggressive nationalism. Strobe Talbott, head of the Brookings Institution (where I work), told Ms. Glasser he had spoken with a highly placed Asian official who said Washington "is now the epicenter of instability in the world."

In this context, it is especially troubling that Lt. Gen. McMaster and Gary Cohn, the head of the National Economic Council, teamed up to publish a startling defense of Mr. Trump's crockery-breaking European tour. The key doctrinal sentence runs: "The president embarked on his first foreign trip with a clear-eyed outlook that the world is not a 'global community' but an arena where nations, nongovernmental actors and businesses engage and compete for advantage."

Lest the reader conclude that the authors regard this as a disagreeable reality, they declare: "Rather than

deny this elemental nature of international affairs, we embrace it." Hooray for the war of all against all! Lt. Gen. McMaster and Mr. Cohn are attacking a straw man. There is a lot of daylight between Hobbes and Kant. Anarchy is not the only alternative to World Federalism.

Even if an all-encompassing global community does not exist, smaller subcommunities do, because regimes matter. Political scientists have shown that democracies are unlikely to wage war against one another. The core proposition of America's foreign policy for decades has been that democracies have something in common that mutes their antagonism toward one another and shapes a shared outlook on which to base mutual endeavors. NATO's persistence in the face of changing circumstances offers evidence for this proposition, as does inter-democratic cooperation on a host of international issues.

"At every stop in our journey," Lt. Gen. McMaster and Mr. Cohn continue, "we delivered a clear

message to our friends and partners: Where our interests align, we are open to working together." The implication is that where they do not, we aren't.

I cannot imagine a blunter articulation of the transactional myopia that shapes this administration's policies. What about doing the right thing for its own sake, as President George W. Bush did when he placed America's moral authority and material resources behind the global struggle against AIDS?

Worse, Lt. Gen. McMaster and Mr. Cohn tacitly presuppose a pinched, shortsighted understanding of American interests. This week marks the 70th anniversary of the Marshall Plan. If Mr. Trump had been president after World War II, the U.S. would not have offered such assistance to a struggling Europe. Why spend the equivalent of \$130 billion in today's dollars to give Europeans a hand up? Why not retreat across the Atlantic and leave them to their fate?

President Truman and Secretary of State George Marshall had learned the answer to these questions from Franklin Roosevelt: In the long run, the U.S. will not survive as an island of democracy in a sea of autocracy. If Americans cherish not only their prosperity but also their institutions, they need allies who share their principles. This is an example of what Alexis de Tocqueville termed "self-interest rightly understood." By contrast, Mr. Trump embraces self-interest wrongly understood, and his enablers, who surely know better, are helping him peddle this poison as medicine.

Yes, NATO partners should contribute more to the common defense. But even if they paid nothing, a free and democratic Europe would still serve the interests of the U.S.

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**The
New York
Times**

The Editorial Board

4-5 minutes

Todd Heisler/The New York Times

Odds are you need to use that phone in your pocket many times a day — and doing so leaves you no choice but to constantly relay data revealing your location and movements to Verizon, AT&T or whatever cellphone company you pay for the service. For most people, most of the time, that's not a concern, if they're aware of it at all. But how easy should it be for the government to get its hands on that data?

That's the question at the heart of a major new case the Supreme Court agreed on Monday to hear. The justices' decision could redefine not only the limits on law enforcement access to cellphone-location records, but the future of surveillance more broadly.

**The
Washington
Post**

enparker

5-6 minutes

Editorial : Privacy in the Cellphone Age

The petitioner in the case, Timothy Carpenter, was convicted in 2013 of a string of armed robberies in Michigan and Ohio, based partly on location data that placed his cellphone near the scene of several of the crimes. The police got that data — revealing several months of Mr. Carpenter's movements — without a warrant, which would have required them to show they had probable cause to believe a crime had been committed. Instead, they requested it under a federal law that requires only "reasonable grounds" to believe the data is "relevant and material" to an ongoing investigation — a more lenient standard. Mr. Carpenter challenged his conviction as an unreasonable search under the Fourth Amendment.

The lower courts ruled against him. There was no "search" in the first place, they said, because when he signed up with his phone company he agreed to let it record his location, and he couldn't reasonably expect the information to remain private. That reasoning, known as the third-party doctrine, comes from

a 1979 Supreme Court decision, when people made calls on rotary-dial phones and did their research in the Yellow Pages.

There's good reason to question the scope of that doctrine now, when virtually everyone is online virtually all the time, being exposed to constant, warrantless digital surveillance. In a 2012 Supreme Court ruling that the police needed a warrant to track a car with a GPS device, Justice Sonia Sotomayor said in a concurrence that the doctrine is "ill suited to the digital age, in which people reveal a great deal of information about themselves to third parties in the course of carrying out mundane tasks."

In Mr. Carpenter's case, the government argues that location data is different from content, which is protected by the Fourth Amendment's guarantee against unreasonable searches. But that distinction is increasingly meaningless. The major cellphone carriers receive tens of thousands of location-data requests from law

enforcement each year, and for an obvious reason: That information is extremely valuable, especially when combined with other data sources to paint an even more detailed picture of a person's life. Mr. Carpenter's location data, for example, didn't just link him to the robberies; it revealed when he slept at home and when he didn't, and the church he likely attended on Sundays.

In 2014, Chief Justice John Roberts Jr. wrote that cellphones have become "such a pervasive and insistent part of daily life that the proverbial visitor from Mars might conclude they were an important feature of human anatomy."

The third-party doctrine needs to be reimaged in light of Americans' new relationship to technology and their rapidly changing expectations of data privacy.

If not, Congress should follow what several states have already done and pass legislation requiring warrants for phone-location data.

Parker: If Trump stops tweeting, how will we know who he really is?

<https://www.facebook.com/kathle>

Those words came from a friend of mine named "Jack," quite possibly President Trump's biggest fan. A former Secret Service agent, Jack is your typical die-hard Trump supporter.

kids. He's honest, hard-working — a true-blue patriot, brave and loyal to the core. He and I are at political odds these days and argue frequently about Trump.

Act Four newsletter

The intersection of culture and politics.

"Yes, but" is about all I can get out before Jack is off on a rollicking defense of the president, whom he finds utterly unobjectionable — except, that is, for those "dadgum tweets."

What?! Yes, even Jack was appalled by Trump's tweets about

"If only he would stop tweeting."

That is to say, he's a white, Christian male, married with two

London Mayor Sadiq Khan following the London terrorist attack. Hearing about them propelled Jack into a 40-minute tirade, he told me.

President Trump's travel ban is facing multiple court battles, and his tendency to tweet about it isn't helping his lawyers. President Trump's travel ban is facing multiple court battles, and his tendency to tweet about it isn't helping his lawyers. (Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

(Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

Maybe there's hope after all. The only hitch is that Jack thinks Trump would be fine if only he'd stop blurting unfiltered thoughts on social media. (We probably differ on our definition of "fine.")

The first of the tweets in question came the morning after the London incident. Trump cited the casualty numbers, then added: "Mayor of London says there is 'no reason to be alarmed!'"

Utterly wrong and false. Fake news, if you will.

What Khan had said was that Londoners shouldn't be alarmed by the increased police presence. Therein lie several magnitudes of

difference. Thus, we infer, Trump either opted to be repugnantly antagonistic or was balefully misinformed. The latter might have been forgivable had Trump admitted as much. But no, instead, this childish man (or mannish child?) doubled down.

In a subsequent tweet, he wrote: "Pathetic excuse by London Mayor Sadiq Khan who had to think fast on his 'no reason to be alarmed' statement. MSM [mainstream media] is working hard to sell it."

One doesn't know whether to scream or scream louder.

Surely, even Trump can't believe that people are so gullible as to accept that the media, in reporting Khan's complete quote rather than the abridged "presidential" version, are trying to put something over. But then, Trump doesn't have to believe it. He knows his fans will consume whatever he serves because they elected him, didn't they?

The bilious billionaire conned the nation — and people like Jack aren't bothered.

"The truth is, I don't care about anybody anymore," Jack says, referring to umbrage over Trump's

more troubling policies, from the travel ban to the wall. "I only care about our country."

About this, I have no doubt. An Iraq veteran and a physically imposing man who knows how to handle artillery, Jack's the guy you want in your bunker. Unlike most denizens of the Washington swamp, he's refreshingly without guile or artifice. And when he talks about love of country, I know he's not talking about raising a flag on the Fourth of July. He's talking about putting his life on the line.

Thus, I take Jack's comments seriously and respectfully. I try to understand where he's coming from as I consider the disconnect between my view of this disastrous president and that of a bit more than one-third of the American people. How can we see things so differently?

In a word, he told me, Obama.

Whatever Trump is, former president Barack Obama is viewed by Jack and cohorts as having been far worse, enough so that nothing Trump does stylistically matters as much as what Obama did substantively. The deeds-over-words trope dovetails with Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway's

scolding of NBC's "Today" show anchors Monday. The media focus too much on what Trump tweets, she said, and not enough on what he does.

But words do matter, as Conway well knows. When you're the president, they matter profoundly. Trump can't pretend anymore that he's just ol' Donald being himself. That this must be explained to him is concerning enough. More to the urgency of his Twitter obsession: If he's impulsive enough to toss off a gratuitous insult to a mayor grappling with catastrophe, what else might he be willing to say — and to whom?

So, yes, on one hand, Trump must stop tweeting. On the other, how else would we know how truly demented the man is? Luckily, it's not too late to save the country, yet. But if Jack is worried about the president's tweeting, it may be time for congressional Republicans to acknowledge what has long been obvious, declare the man incompetent and deliberate accordingly.

If not, you ain't (even) got Jack.