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FRANCE - EUROPE



Court orders France to improve living conditions for migrants

The Christian Science Monitor

July 31, 2017 Paris—The French government will provide water and sanitation to migrants in Calais and open two reception centers away from the city, it said hours after a court ordered it to end what it called inhumane treatment of foreigners trying to get to Britain.

Less than a year after "the Jungle," a vast shanty town next to the northern port city, was razed, migrants have returned, with charities and the national human rights watchdog fiercely critical of the squalid conditions they live in.

Interior minister Gerard Collomb said there were about 350-400 migrants around Calais, compared

with the estimated 10,000 who used to live in the Jungle. The two new centers to house them will be in Bailleul and Troisvaux, about an hour's drive inland.

"We don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past but we also want to handle the problems in Calais," Mr. Collomb said, indicating a determination to avoid providing facilities that could draw migrants to the town, making it once more a hub for those trying to reach Britain.

Access to water, showers, and toilets will be provided in the Calais area via mobile facilities, Collomb said.

Earlier on Monday, France's top administrative court, the Conseil

d'Etat, ruled that the treatment of migrants was unlawful.

"The Conseil d'Etat considers that these living conditions reveal a failure by the public authorities that has exposed these people to inhuman or degrading treatment," it said in a statement.

"These shortcomings are a serious and unlawful infringement on a fundamental freedom."

It said a lower court was within its rights to order the provision of toilets, drinking water, and showers.

France has avoided the brunt of Europe's migrant crisis, receiving a fraction of the asylum seekers handled by Italy or Germany.

While President Emmanuel Macron has called for migrants to be treated with dignity, his government has refused to open a new reception center in Calais, saying it would act as a magnet for migrants.

Last week, Human Rights Watch pressed France to end what it described as recurrent police violence against migrants in Calais. Collomb said there would be an investigation into police behavior.

The European Union is struggling to find a coherent answer to a migration crisis that has tested cooperation between member states. Mr. Macron has instructed his government to speed up France's asylum process.



Top French court orders government to offer humanitarian aid to Calais migrants

By James

McAuley

PARIS — France's highest administrative court ordered the government to provide humanitarian aid to the hundreds of migrants who have continued arriving in the northern port city of Calais even after authorities destroyed the infamous "Jungle" camp.

In blistering language, the court decried the squalid conditions facing migrants in Calais, long a dramatic focal point in French politics and in Europe's ongoing migration crisis. It also rejected appeals by state and local authorities, both of which had resisted an earlier order to improve the situation.

"The living conditions of migrants reveal a failure of public authority, which is liable to expose the persons concerned to inhuman or degrading treatment and thus constitutes a serious and manifestly unlawful interference with a

fundamental freedom," read the opinion of the court, known as the Conseil d'Etat.

The ruling came less than a week after the publication of a sharply critical report from Human Rights Watch, based on conversations with approximately 60 migrants, about half of whom were minors. Those interviewed complained of police violence and regular disruptions of humanitarian assistance, especially food and access to amenities as basic as toilets and showers.

Migrants in Calais interviewed by The Washington Post earlier in the summer voiced the same complaints, with some saying they now sleep on the street.

But perhaps the most shocking allegation in the Human Rights Watch report — widely discussed in French media — was that riot police regularly use pepper spray on child migrants, even when they pose no conceivable threat.

Interior Minister Gérard Collomb said in response to the court's ruling Monday that France would open two facilities in the Calais region to house and better inform incoming migrants about the asylum process.

Collomb assured reporters that "better access to water will be guaranteed." But this, he added, went hand in hand with "avoiding the need for the resettlement of camps."

The interior minister also addressed the Human Rights Watch report. "The police do not use pepper spray but tear gas," he said.

For nearly two years, the predominantly working-class city of Calais was home to the "Jungle," a sprawling, squalid encampment where thousands of migrants and refugees waited in legal limbo as they tried to enter Britain, 20 miles across the English Channel.

Throughout that time, local residents complained that the presence of so

many migrants posed considerable threats to their personal and economic security. They found their champion in far-right politician Marine Le Pen, whose candidacy for the French presidency featured tough stances on migrants and Muslims. Le Pen lost the election in a landslide, but she won in Calais.

After revelations that some of those involved in the 2015 Paris attacks had entered Europe disguised as migrants, the presence of an undocumented and unregulated migrant camp on French soil forced the government to act — especially as elections loomed.

Officials demolished the Jungle in October. But the end of the Jungle was not the end of the situation in Calais, as migrants have continued arriving, most still hoping to go on to Britain.



EN LIGNE - France Plans More Shelters for Migrants in Calais

PARIS (AP) — France's interior minister

announced plans on Monday to open two centers to shelter migrants who return to the northern port city of Calais, determined to get to Britain despite the closing of a vast makeshift camp in Calais last fall.

Interior Minister Gérard Collomb, who estimated the number of migrants who have returned to Calais at about 400, said that so far this year, more than 30,000 attempts had been made to sneak into the ferry port or the Eurotunnel train station, or to jump onto trucks heading to Britain.

Mr. Collomb also ordered a report on accusations of police mistreatment of migrants in France. Last week, Human Rights Watch said the police had been "routinely" using pepper spray on refugees, including when they were sleeping.

Calais was the site of a sprawling, slum-like camp for as many as up to

7,000 refugees and asylum-seekers before the French government closed the camp in October. Most of the camp's inhabitants were taken by bus to centers around France.

"We don't want to restart the bad experiences of the past that all ended in the same way," Mr. Collomb said.

A court ruled last month that hundreds of migrants still making their way to Calais should have access to drinking water, showers and toilets. The city of Calais and the interior minister appealed the ruling.

The Council of State, France's highest administrative body, rejected the appeal on Monday, ruling that the authorities in Calais were exposing migrants to "inhuman or degrading treatment" that amounts to a "grave and manifestly illegal attack on a fundamental freedom." The council upheld a court order that the authorities must help migrants who wish to move to shelters.

In response, Mr. Collomb said two centers would be created to shelter migrants and speed up assessments of their circumstances — including whether they should be expelled from France. He also said

that in keeping with the court order, officials would set up mobile sites so migrants can have access to water and toilets.

Mr. Collomb said at a news conference that there were 350 to 400 migrants in the area, two-thirds of them Eritreans and Ethiopians, and the rest Afghans and Pakistanis. Aid groups have put the figure at as many as 700.

The number is small compared with the tens of thousands of migrants who arrive in Italy, the European landing spot for many of those who make their way to Calais. But for some in the French city, it is a sign that more migrants will arrive if not dissuaded.

Mr. Collomb denied the report by Human Rights Watch that police officers in Calais were pepper-spraying migrants, in part by saying that French security forces use only tear gas — not pepper spray.

He insisted, however, that such accusations are taken seriously, saying that 23 investigations of alleged police abuse have been opened. He said witnesses should come forward, because abuse claims are often "anonymous, not dated and not localized."

Collomb said Monday that there are 350 to 500 migrants in the city, many from Eritrea and Ethiopia.

According to the Human Rights Watch report, without the Jungle and the basic support it provided — mostly with the help of British and French aid workers — these newcomers have few of the basic necessities they need.

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

Michael Bochenek, senior counsel to the Human Rights Watch

children's division and the principal author of the Calais report, said the court's decision was a welcome, if overdue, intervention.

"It's hard to see how the state could have reached a different conclusion and how the authorities could have possibly resisted offering toilets, showers and water for migrants in need."

But, he added, the broader problem remains the difficulty and opacity of the process by which migrants can apply for asylum in France. While many of those who arrive still wish to go to Britain, few are aware of their options should they decide to remain in France.

By contrast, those who are aware face significant "structural barriers," Bochenek said, often lacking the means to travel from Calais to Lille, nearly 70 miles away, to appear in person at the one office in the region where they are entitled to apply.

The New York Times

Los Angeles Makes Deal to Host the 2028 Summer Olympics

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles officials announced a deal Monday with the International Olympic Committee to play host to the 2028 Summer Olympics, giving up a bid for the 2024 Games to Paris and bringing the Olympics back to the United States for the first time since 2002.

At a news conference Monday evening at StubHub Center south of Los Angeles, the city's mayor, Eric Garcetti, set high expectations. "We know we will return the Olympic legacy to what it's all about," he said, adding later, "We're a city that has always been a Games-changer and again will be in 2028."

Olympic officials had paved the way for an unusual dual announcement in the fall for the 2024 and the 2028 Games. Both Los Angeles and Paris were bidding for the 2024 Games, with Paris favored.

Olympic officials, however, saw an opportunity that they considered a win for all by awarding Paris 2024 and giving 2028 to Los Angeles, whose Games in 1984 are still held up as a financial and emotional success. It would also help the Olympic committee resolve its difficulty in finding host cities for the Games, which have become financial headaches for many places.

Los Angeles officials put a positive spin on receiving the later Games, noting that the extra four years would allow for more expansion of the city's subway system.

"This opportunity is unprecedented," said Casey Wasserman, the

chairman of the city's bid committee. "Never has an organizing committee had 11 years to prepare."

Los Angeles would have the Games for the third time, after 1932 and 1984. The Summer Olympics were last in the United States in 1996, in Atlanta. Salt Lake City played host to the last Games in the country, the Winter Olympics in 2002.

The I.O.C. is expected to formally announce the hosts for the Games at a meeting in Lima, Peru, on Sept. 13.

From the start, Los Angeles had made it clear that while it preferred to have the Olympics in 2024, it would be willing to accommodate the 2028 Games.

Under the agreement, the I.O.C. said it would give at least \$1.8 billion to the Los Angeles organizing committee and would make advance payments of \$180 million to compensate the local committee for the extra four years it must work and \$160 million for youth sports programs, a payout that typically comes after the Games.

Thomas Bach, the president of the I.O.C., had previously balked at such a perk, saying the Games themselves were a gift, but apparently came around to it.

As part of the deal, the I.O.C. also agreed to forfeit its usual 20 percent share of any potential surplus revenue from the event to the local organizing committee, according to the bid's spokesman, Jeff Millman.

The Los Angeles City Council and the United States Olympic Committee will consider the

agreement in August and, if it is approved, send it on to the I.O.C. for its vote in September.

The agreement is not without risks for Los Angeles.

The cost and logistical estimates that Los Angeles prepared in making its bid for the Games — and selling the idea to local officials and voters — were based on the event taking place in seven years. As officials here began contemplating the probability that Los Angeles would get the Games in 2028, they expressed concern about the entailing uncertainties; costs are likely to be higher than they would be in 2024.

Los Angeles's plan depended on its sprawling system of stadiums and arenas — some left over from the 1984 Olympics, others belonging to major sports teams and university campuses — that in theory would keep construction costs low. The estimated cost is \$5.3 billion, though city officials expected the funding to come from private sources and ticket sales.

The United States Olympic Committee withdrew Boston as its official bid city in July 2015 because of intense local opposition, clearing the way for Los Angeles.

There has been minimal opposition in Los Angeles to the Olympics coming — at least as compared with other cities — reflecting, in part, the successful experience in 1984. Yet there was some opposition from a late-emerging group called NOlympics LA. The group denounced the decision.

"This is a complete miscarriage of anything remotely resembling democracy," the group said. "We insist that the local media acknowledge the lack of transparency and accountability there is in this last-minute, hastily thrown together 'plan.' The council, mayor, bid committee, Donald Trump and I.O.C. are all colluding to thrust an unvetted plan onto the second-largest city in America."

President Trump had said on Twitter in July he was "working hard" to bring the Games to Los Angeles, and he met in the Oval Office with Mr. Bach to pledge his "full support," the White House said in a statement then.

Getting the Games will be a triumph for Paris, which failed in bids for the 1992, 2008 and 2012 Olympics. This time, it presented a streamlined bid and emphasized staging events at postcard venues, such as open-water swimming in the Seine and beach volleyball at the foot of the Eiffel Tower.

"Paris and Los Angeles are two amazing global cities that are united in their support of the Olympic cause and we stand together now to help the Games thrive in 2024 and 2028," Mayor Anne Hidalgo of Paris said in a statement.

The dual award to Paris and Los Angeles is seen as a chance to stabilize an Olympic movement besieged by staggering costs and declining interest in hosting by cities in democratic nations. Aside from Boston, the cities of Rome, Budapest and Hamburg, Germany, withdrew their candidacies for the 2024 Games. By naming two host

cities at once, the I.O.C. will not have to worry about cities losing bids for the Summer Olympics and declining to bid again.

In getting the 2024 Olympics, Paris can celebrate the centennial anniversary of the last time it hosted the Summer Games. By bestowing the Games, the I.O.C. can also pat itself on the back for helping Paris recover from recent terrorist attacks.

Paris, like Los Angeles, carries some risk in its bid.

An athletes' village must still be built, at an estimated cost of \$2

billion. If there are severe cost overruns in Paris, they could further discourage other cities from bidding on Games.

On the other hand, Los Angeles had sold itself as better prepared than competitors. Instead of building an athletes' village, it plans to use existing dorm rooms at U.C.L.A. And, at this point, no permanent arenas need to be built.

The 2028 Games in Los Angeles will inspire a generation of American athletes and bring an infusion of cash to the United States Olympic Committee, and they could motivate

more American companies to become global corporate sponsors for the Olympics in the wake of McDonald's withdrawal, said Rick Burton, a professor of sports management at Syracuse and a former chief marketing officer of the United States Olympic Committee.

"The biggest pro is, L.A. is a winner again," Mr. Burton said in a telephone interview.

At the same time, he said, there could be a change in the city's political and Olympic leadership by 2028. Arenas may need updating for the latest technology. And it is

possible that new construction will be needed if additional sports are added to the Games. In addition, Mr. Burton said, there is no way to predict what the city's economy or social mood will be in 2028 or whether a severe natural disaster like an earthquake will occur.

By waiting four additional years, "you're rolling the dice a few more times," Mr. Burton said. "All of that has to be planned for. My guess is, it will be."



L.A. to Host the 2028 Summer Olympics

Aria Bendix

Los Angeles is set to host the 2028 Summer Olympics after reaching an agreement with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the office of L.A. City Council President Herb Wesson confirmed Monday. The deal will be formally announced at a Monday evening news conference and reviewed by the Olympic council later this week. The decision was widely anticipated, given that L.A. and Paris were the only remaining bidders for the 2024 and 2028 Olympic spots. With L.A.'s position confirmed, Monday's announcement all but secures Paris's status as the host of the 2024 Summer Olympics.

"This is an historic day for Los Angeles, for the United States, and for the Olympic and Paralympic movements around the world," Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said in a statement. "Today, we take a major step toward bringing the Games back to our city for the first time in a

generation and begin a new chapter in Los Angeles's timeless Olympic story." Having previously hosted the Games in 1932 and 1984, L.A. is now set to become a three-time Olympic host.

Monday's decision marks the culmination of a long-running effort on behalf of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) to bring the Summer Games back to the U.S. The last time the Olympics were held in the United States was in 1996, when Atlanta hosted the Summer Games. In 2012, New York was short-listed to host the Summer Olympics, but lost out to London after being denied funding for a stadium proposal. Four years later, Chicago was one of three cities under consideration to host the 2016 Summer Olympics, but the final victory ultimately went to Rio de Janeiro. While the USOC originally selected Boston as its candidate for the 2024 Games, the city was forced to pull out in 2015 amid waning public support.

Like Boston, many European cities dropped out of the running early on, fearing a large financial burden with minimal long-term payoff. While Olympic hosts often expect to see an increase in population size and economic prosperity, recent Olympics—such as the 2016 Summer Games in Rio and the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi—have left cities struggling to fill their newly-constructed hotels and public facilities. As a result, the latest running for the 2024 Games saw early withdrawals from three of the top five contenders: Rome, Budapest, and Hamburg.

With only L.A. and Paris remaining, the IOC voted earlier this month to pursue a dual award that prevented either city from losing its bid. Although both cities were keen on hosting the 2024 Olympics, L.A. officials remained open to negotiations with Paris, which has not hosted the Games since 1924. While L.A.'s bid touted a low-cost approach that did not require the development of additional

infrastructure, the city's heavy traffic was seen as a disadvantage compared to Paris's top-notch public transportation system. Many also saw the Trump administration's current rhetoric toward immigrants as a potential drawback.

Despite these concerns, IOC President Thomas Bach said on Monday that L.A. "presented a strong and enthusiastic candidature" that emphasized the Olympic Agenda's sustainability goals. Bach specifically highlighted the city's plan to engage local youth in the Olympic Games and expand L.A.'s youth sports programming. "This agreement with the IOC will allow us to seed a legacy of hope and opportunity that will lift up every community in Los Angeles—not in 11 years' time, but starting now," Garcetti said on Monday. The committee's decision, he added, "will kick-start our drive to make L.A. the healthiest city in America."



Los Angeles Reaches Deal to Host 2028 Olympics

Matthew Futterman

Officials in Los Angeles and leaders of the International Olympic Committee have reached a deal to bring the Summer Games to Southern California in 2028.

The deal comes after months of discussions between the two parties and will not be official until a vote by the IOC in September, which is considered a formality at this point. The talks moved forward after L.A. officials and the U.S. Olympic Committee signaled they would step back from the race against Paris for the 2024 Games in exchange for securing hosting rights for 2028.

Talks between the parties accelerated in early July, after the full membership of the IOC approved a plan to award the 2024

and 2028 Games simultaneously at its upcoming meeting in September.

The IOC usually awards hosting rights to the Olympics seven years ahead of the Games. However, IOC President Thomas Bach didn't want to lose either Paris or Los Angeles as a potential host city. Both cities and their respective national Olympic committees had indicated they were unlikely to bid again if they lost the current campaign.

The Wall Street Journal reported in May that the IOC was close to a deal to give Paris 2024 and L.A. the 2028 Games.

According to people who have been working on the deal, Los Angeles—in exchange for waiting an additional four years to play host—will receive funding for sports programs. The IOC will also help underwrite the

operating costs of the organization currently known LA24, the private group that will serve as the local organizing committee for the Games. In addition, LA24, which will likely be re-named LA28, is expecting to receive more money from the sales of world-wide Olympic sponsorships than it would have had it played host to the Games in 2024.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said the agreement said the IOC funding will "kick-start our drive to make L.A. the healthiest city in America, by making youth sports more affordable and accessible than ever before."

Bach said the deal would create a "win-win-win situation" for Los Angeles, Paris and the IOC.

Assuming the IOC approves the deal in September, the Summer Games will return to Los Angeles for the first time since 1984, and to the U.S. for the first time since 1996. The U.S. last played host to the Olympics in 2002, when Salt Lake City organized the Winter Olympics.

For the IOC, the deal would lock up two of the world's leading cities to host coming Summer Games after a tumultuous 2016 in Rio de Janeiro forced the organization to rethink its commitment to holding the event in developing countries. Some major international cities have also shied away from hosting Olympics because they are expensive and thus politically unpopular.

A Summer Games in Paris would mark the 100th anniversary of the last time the City of Lights hosted

the event, in 1924. The 2020 Summer Olympics will be in Tokyo.

Bach decided earlier this year the IOC needs Paris



Details emerge in deal to bring 2028 Summer Olympics to Los Angeles

David Wharton

1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games

After weeks of negotiations with the International Olympic Committee, Los Angeles officials have reached a deal to host the 2028 Summer Games under terms they hope will generate hundreds of millions in savings and additional revenues.

The agreement will bring the Olympics back to Southern California for a third time, after Los Angeles hosted in 1984 and 1932. It also opens the door for the 2024 Games to be held in Paris.

"It has been certainly a roller coaster," L.A. bid chairman Casey Wasserman told *The Times*, adding that IOC officials "showed a real willingness to be thoughtful and creative."

Initial reactions to the revised contract between the city and the IOC were mixed.

Andrew Zimbalist, an economist at Smith College in Massachusetts, believes that L.A. officials "played their cards right."

"They've gotten a bunch of concessions that are significant," said Zimbalist, who has been a critic of the Olympic movement in the past.

Others questioned whether local bid officials could have bargained for even more, and whether the public should have been given a voice in the recent negotiations.

"I wonder if this was a missed opportunity for more input," said Jules Boykoff, who teaches political science at Pacific University in Oregon and has studied previous Games. "What did people want them to ask for?"

Monday's announcement ended a tumultuous summer for the rival bid cities and Olympic leaders.

The competition between L.A. and Paris, which began as a simple race for 2024, grew more complex when the IOC — with two eager candidates in hand — decided to name two winners.

L.A. was expected to go second if only because it was willing to consider the option. It knew that the race with Paris would be close and that the U.S. had fallen short in several recent attempts to win the Summer Games. Paris, by contrast, had pushed back against waiting another four years.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, who spearheaded the city's campaign, said the terms of Monday's agreement should outweigh any increased uncertainty that comes with committing to a major event more than a decade in advance.

L.A.'s bid committee has estimated it would cost \$5.3 billion to stage the Games and has predicted it can cover all expenses through revenues such as sponsorships and ticket sales.

"I can look people in the eye and say this is a much stronger deal financially," Garcetti said.

The agreement, which was scheduled to become public at midday Monday, centers on several major issues.

The IOC has predicted it will contribute \$1.7 billion of its broadcast and sponsorship revenues to Paris in 2024.

Its contribution could jump to at least \$2 billion by 2028 because of adjustments to the amount of sponsorship money L.A. would receive.

The city will also have increased flexibility in the selling domestic sponsorships in any categories that

face of political opposition. Only Almaty, Kazakhstan remained in the race when the IOC selected Beijing for the 2022 Winter Games race.

remain unclaimed by the IOC's international corporate partners.

Olympic officials also waived various payments that could ultimately save L.A. organizers tens of millions.

Under normal circumstances, cities that are awarded the Games must begin preparations immediately but do not receive the majority of their IOC contributions until a couple of years before the opening ceremony.

For 2028, the IOC has agreed to advance L.A. a \$180-million advance immediately. That is expected to cover the organizing's committee's costs for operating an extra four years and pump as much as \$160 million into youth sports throughout the city.

In Olympic circles, such public benefits are referred to as "legacy" and usually occur only after the Games have finished and left town.

Garcetti, who has spoken often in recent weeks about his desire for a more timely impact, predicted that youth programs could see increased funding within 12 months.

"I want something for the people of L.A. now," the mayor said. "I want the excitement to build."

But bid leaders seemed most enthusiastic about an element of the agreement that would have to wait until after the closing ceremony.

Their bid estimate includes a \$487.6 million contingency — money that would be set aside to pay for the sort of cost overruns that have plagued recent Games, leaving hosts with substantial deficits.

Olympic experts have said that L.A. could be different because its plan relies on existing venues such as Staples Center, Pauley Pavilion and the Coliseum. It avoids spending billions to construct new stadiums and arenas.

Further savings would arise from housing athletes and the media at

UCLA and USC rather than building expensive villages.

If the Games finish at or under budget, the \$487-million contingency would convert to a surplus — similar to the one left by the 1984 Los Angeles Games — and L.A. officials have struck a deal to keep most of that money.

With the IOC waiving its customary right to 20% of any surplus, the resulting amount could total \$100 million or more.

Still, accepting the 2028 Summer Games comes with considerable risk.

Politics and economies can make huge shifts over a decade. The 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games offered a recent example — the Brazilian economy, which was booming a few years earlier, suffered a slump that left organizers making last-minute cutbacks and scrambling to pay their bills.

L.A. organizers will also have to renegotiate contracts with all the venues, shifting to a new date. Wasserman said talks are already underway.

Finally, the City Council will have to dive back into the issue after offering its support for 2024 earlier this year. An ad hoc committee is scheduled to reconvene later this week.

Garcetti and Wasserman said they are confident that they can reach an accord with all parties — which include state and federal officials — before the IOC meets in mid-September.

At that point, IOC members will be asked to vote their approval and L.A. must sign the revised host city contract, making the deal official.

VICE | Looks Like LA Will Host the Olympics in 2028

3 minutes

As long as it doesn't get swallowed up by the ocean, reduced to rubble by an earthquake, baked into a lifeless desert, or blown to smithereens by North Korea, it looks like Los Angeles will host the summer Olympics in 2028.

LA city officials reportedly struck a deal with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to host the games in 2028, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. The city had been jockeying with Paris for the 2024 games when—in a rare move earlier this month—the IOC announced it would tap the winning bids for both 2024 and 2028 in September.

Paris doggedly wanted 2024—in part so that the Olympics would fall on the 100-year anniversary of its last Summer Games, held in 1924—and LA had voiced its willingness to hold off until the tail end of the decade, the *New York Times* reports. When the IOC sweetened the deal for LA with promises of

major financial incentives, the city pulled the trigger on 2028.

"LA 2024 and the Olympic Organizing Committee have worked out a deal for Los Angeles to host the 2028 Olympic Games," Caolinn Mejza, a spokeswoman for LA City Council president Herb Wesson, told CNN Money. "The LA City Council will hold an ad-hoc meeting on

Friday to discuss accepting the deal."

Despite the many financial problems the Olympic Games have been known to cause in various host cities, LA's bid committee estimates it will be able to foot the estimated \$5.3 billion cost for 2028 through ticket sales and sponsorships alone, the *LA Times* reports. The IOC has



Olympics: Paris Nearly Assured as 2024 Host

Rory Carroll and
Ingrid Melander / Reuters

(LOS ANGELES / PARIS) - Paris moved within a hair's breadth on Monday of formally being chosen to host the 2024 Summer Olympics after rival candidate city Los Angeles agreed to accept the consolation prize of the 2028 Games in a rare two-way contest between the cities.

Both cities were competing for the 2024 Summer Games after several other contenders withdrew, and the stage was set for Paris to win its bid when the International Olympic Committee confirmed that Los Angeles had officially embraced the later date of 2028.

"The IOC welcomes this decision of the Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic Candidature Committee," said IOC President Thomas Bach in a statement.

The IOC's unprecedented move of awarding two Games in tandem turned the spotlight on security challenges facing the French capital while giving Los Angeles, which last hosted the Olympics 33 years ago, ample time to upgrade its public transportation system.

already pledged about \$1.8 billion to LA's committee, and the city plans on hosting events in stadiums that already exist and housing fans in dorms at USC and UCLA. With the obvious payout of bringing tens of thousands of tourists to your city, and it's not hard to see why city officials were happy to settle with 2028.

Residents of Los Angeles, which ranks as America's second-largest city by population, expressed a mix of enthusiasm for the Games and anxiety about placing additional strains on the city's notoriously heavy traffic.

"It was a great thing the last time we had it here in L.A., and I think it will be a boon for business and kind of bring unity back to L.A.," Los Angeles resident Domenic Ferrante, 53, told Reuters.

The hosting agreement for Los Angeles commits the IOC to furnishing the city financial contributions totaling \$2 billion, the committee said.

An official designation of Paris for the 2024 Olympics has yet to be announced. Assuming it clinches the Summer Games for that year, it would mark the centenary of the 1924 Paris Olympics, depicted in the 1981 Oscar-winning motion picture "Chariots of Fire."

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo welcomed the Los Angeles decision but stopped short of saying the 2024 Olympics were assured for her city, adding that talks with the IOC would continue through August to "reach a tripartite deal."

"I can look people in the eye and say this is a much stronger deal financially," LA mayor Eric Garcetti, who campaigned for the Olympics, told the *LA Times*.

Although both cities aren't officially hosting quite yet, the IOC announced Monday that it anticipates formally handing Paris and LA the hosting rights at its next

A representative for Hidalgo's office, speaking on condition of anonymity, said definitive word was expected to come when the IOC meets in September in Lima, Peru, after several more steps in the procedure had been finalized.

The deal was first reported on Monday by the Los Angeles Times, which cited an unnamed source.

The co-chair for Paris' Olympics bid, Tony Estanguet, said its organizing team had convinced the IOC "of the merits of awarding" the 2024 Games to Paris. His committee hailed the Los Angeles announcement as "a key step in the process of awarding the Olympics."

'Win-win'

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's office said he and other backers of the city's bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Games would make an announcement to the news media at 5 p.m. PDT (0000 GMT).

But the decision was confirmed in nearly simultaneous statements issued hours earlier by the IOC in Zurich and the Los Angeles Olympic bid committee in Los Angeles.

"It is a win-win for the two cities," Canadian senior IOC member Dick Pound told Reuters by phone. "It's

meeting, slated for September in Lima, Peru. As long as local and state officials agree to green-light the Games by the time that meeting rolls around, which Garcetti told the *LA Times* won't be a problem, LA is set to host its third Olympic Games—should global warming not get to it first.

good for the IOC because we've got two great cities lined up for the next two big shows."

The next Olympic Summer Games, in 2020, is already scheduled to be held in Tokyo. Los Angeles previously hosted the Summer Games in 1932 and 1984.

The Southern California city had argued that it could host a low-cost Olympics given that it already has all the necessary infrastructure in place, while Paris would need to build several expensive new facilities.

But Paris was seen as the front-runner for the 2024 Games because it had been passed over in a series of earlier Olympic bids and because the French capital will have marked 100 years since the last time it hosted the Games.

Paris has a world-class public transportation system.

Los Angeles' reputation for heavy traffic and the impact of President Donald Trump's ban on travel to the United States from certain Muslim-majority nations had been seen as factors weighing against the latest bid by the U.S. West Coast city.

WASHINGTON EXAMINER | Trump celebrates Los Angeles being awarded the 2028 Olympics

Kyle Feldscher

President Trump said he's proud the Olympics are coming back to the United States "for the first time in a generation" after the Los Angeles bid for the 2028 games was accepted Monday.

"For the first time in a generation, the Olympics are coming back to the United States, and I am proud to support LA 2028," Trump said in a White House statement. "I want to congratulate the United States

Olympic Committee and the entire bid team for developing a plan that will ensure LA 2028 demonstrates the best in American creativity, innovation, and hospitality."

"The United States has a remarkable history of passionate and loyal support for the Olympic Movement. No country has won more Olympic medals or trained more Olympic and Paralympic athletes. America always shines brightly during the Games, and LA 2028 will be no exception."

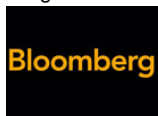
The International Olympic Committee announced Monday Paris would host the games in 2024 and Los Angeles would host in 2028. It's the first time the summer Olympic games will be on American soil since 1996 and the first Olympic games since the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002.

Trump praised the games and called on Americans to unite behind Team USA.

"The Olympic and Paralympic Games are one of the world's

greatest celebrations of humanity, and they hold a special place in the hearts of all Americans," he said. "Every two years, we unite behind the remarkable athletes of Team USA who represent our nation's talent, drive, and our unwavering will to win. Their triumphs inspire our own pursuit of the American dream."

"I am confident that the Summer Games in Los Angeles will exemplify both the Olympic ideal and the American spirit, and we look forward to hosting them."



Minter : Give Los Angeles the Olympic Games for Good

Adam Minter
@AdamMinter
More stories by Adam Minter

Or, at least make it one of a few permanent homes for future Olympics.

Angelenos have waited 33 years for the Summer Olympics to return to their city. On Monday night, they

received word that they'll only have to wait 11 more. In an unusual decision, the International Olympic Committee announced that Los Angeles had agreed to host the 2028 Olympics, ceding the 2024 games to rival bidder Paris. The joint award -- the first in Olympic history -- will be made official at an IOC meeting in Lima later this month.

Given their druthers, Olympic commissars wouldn't necessarily have chosen this particular solution. But skyrocketing costs have scared off many major cities from even bidding on the games. Picking Los Angeles -- with its existing stock of Olympic-class sports facilities -- at least guaranteed the competition a home in 2028. And there's a good argument to be made that that home should be permanent.

One way to think of the modern Olympics is as a giant urban infrastructure project. So, in addition to stadiums, pools, velodromes and other sports venues (many unlikely to be used again), preparing for the games also typically requires investments in mass transit, pedestrian paths and even housing.

Such massive projects are virtually guaranteed to go over budget: Every Olympics since 1960 has incurred

cost overruns -- half of them of 100 percent or more. In Tokyo, home of the 2020 Olympics, estimated costs recently hit \$12.6 billion, almost double the original budget, and there's still three years to go. The \$1.5 billion in debt that Montreal ran up to build infrastructure for the 1976 games, including an Olympic stadium that locals affectionately refer to as "The Big Owe," was only paid off in November 2006. In Athens, home of the 2004 games, some analysts blame the Olympics and its costs for bringing on the Greek debt crisis. And, as recently as April, organizers in 2016 host Rio de Janeiro were trying to pay off outstanding debts with used air-conditioners and other secondhand goods. The IOC has declined requests for help.

Not surprisingly, all that red ink has begun to shrink the pool of bidders. In 2014, both Oslo and Stockholm backed off bids for the 2022 Winter Olympics due to high costs and popular opposition. The IOC, which allegedly wanted the games to return to Europe, was left to choose between Almaty, Kazakhstan and snowless Beijing. In a very close vote, Beijing won largely on its success in hosting the \$40 billion 2008 games -- hardly a welcoming

signal to countries considering future bids.

The IOC isn't oblivious to the problem. In late 2014 it enacted Olympic Agenda 2020, a 40-point reform program designed to lower the costs of bidding for and hosting the Olympics. Provisions include promoting the use of existing or temporary venues, and allowing host cities to move events to another city or neighboring country for reasons of "sustainability" or geography. Budapest announced a bid for the 2024 Olympics, in part hoping to take advantage of Agenda 2020. But concerns over -- yes -- cost-overruns and corruption forced the city to withdraw.

That left two bidders. Los Angeles, which entered the competition after Boston backed out over swelling cost estimates, and Paris. Despite a late start, Los Angeles was a powerful candidate thanks to its suite of existing Olympic-quality venues and an entrepreneurial spirit that turned the 1984 Olympics into a profit-making machine.

Those same virtues argue for at least considering making the city a permanent home for the Games. The arguments in favor of one are hard to refute. It would eliminate the

spiraling costs associated with the building of expensive Olympic stadiums and other sporting infrastructure that will never be fully utilized again, not to mention the costs of flattering IOC judges. Los Angeles in particular, which has held two Olympics, boasts a thriving professional and collegiate sports scene as well as an entertainment industry that's mastered the art of monetizing it; that's ensured many of the city's old Olympic venues, including the nearly century-old L.A. Coliseum, continue to be used.

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Of course, the world likely wouldn't accept an American city as the only permanent venue (not least because in the current political climate, quite a few fans might have trouble getting visas to attend). The IOC would want to add at least two more cities in different regions that enjoy some of the same infrastructure advantages and then rotate through them. Shanghai could be an option; so, too, Paris or Berlin. Certainly, having just a few Olympic cities would be better than risking having none at all.

NPR : Los Angeles Will Host Summer Olympics In 2028 : The Two-Way

Camila Domonoske Twitter

Los Angeles, which hosted the Summer Olympics in 1932 and 1984, will be home to the Games again — in 2028.

The organizers of LA's Olympics bid had originally been pursuing the 2024 games. But they ceded those games to Paris, and agreed to wait for the next round.

The decision will be officially announced on Monday afternoon. NPR's Tom Goldman has confirmed the successful bid with an LA 2024 official.

LA will be only the second city to host the modern Olympics three

times. London became the first three-time Olympic City in 2012.

As The Associated Press reports, the bidding for the 2024 games was marked by reluctance, rather than fierce competition:

"LA and Paris were the last two bids remaining after a tumultuous process that exposed the unwillingness of cities to bear the financial burden of hosting an event that has become synonymous with cost overruns.

"LA was not even the first American entrant in the contest. Boston withdrew two years ago as public support for its bid collapsed over concerns about use of taxpayer cash. The U.S. bid switched from

the east to the West Coast as LA entered the race.

"But the same apprehensions that spooked politicians and the local population in Boston soon became evident in Europe where three cities pulled out."

Hamburg, Rome and Budapest all saw their Olympic bids wither in the face of an unenthusiastic (or vehemently opposed) public.

With just two cities left, and a general sense of international Olympic-hosting apathy, the International Olympic Committee saw a chance to book two summers at once — and put off the next round of bids for a few years, the AP notes.

As for which city got which games, there were several factors at play. Paris last hosted the Games in 1924, which made it a "sentimental favorite" for the 2024 games, as Ben Bergman of member station KPCC noted last month. And Paris only had funding secured to build facilities for 2024.

"LA's bid uses existing facilities, making it far more flexible and cheaper," Bergman reported. "It won't need to build any new permanent venues."

The next summer games will be held in Tokyo in 2020. Upcoming Winter Olympics will be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea, next year, and in Beijing in 2022.

**The
Washington
Times**

Los Angeles officially gets 2028 Olympics, Paris to host 2024 Games

CBS/AP July 31, 2017, 2:13 PM

Summer Games to Paris and then brings the Olympics back to Southern California for a third time. L.A. hosted the Games in 1984 and in 1932.

The International Olympic Committee will officially announce the decision later Monday.

In July, the committee announced it would reward each city with a bid to host the 2024 or 2028 games -- but

the decision was expected to come in September.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said on Monday that the city is taking "a major step toward bringing the Games back to our city for the first time in a generation" and called it a "historic day for Los Angeles, for the United States" and the Olympic community.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said last month that his city was

open to hosting the Games in 2024 and 2028.

Speaking Monday evening at a soccer stadium in Carson -- just outside LA -- Garcetti explained that the 2028 proposal was the better of the two, promising to bring hundreds of millions of dollars in additional benefits.

The deal "was too good to pass up," he said.

Last Updated Jul 31, 2017 10:15 PM EDT

The city of Los Angeles has reached a deal to host the 2028 Olympic Games, the Los Angeles Olympic Committee confirmed to CBS News.

The deal, first reported by The Los Angeles Times, awards the 2024

He also suggested the IOC would easily ratify the 2024-2028 deal in September.

Los Angeles has budgeted more than \$5 billion to host the Games,



Paris stops short of claiming victory after LA announcement

AP Published
5:10 a.m. ET

Aug. 1, 2017 | Updated 5:33 a.m.
ET Aug. 1, 2017

FILE - This July 11, 2017 file photo shows banners of Los Angeles 2024 candidacy, Paris 2024 candidacy and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), during the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Extraordinary Session, at the SwissTech Convention Centre, in Lausanne, Switzerland. It was announced Monday, July 31, that Los Angeles has reached an agreement with international Olympic leaders that will open the way for the city to host the 2028 Summer Games, while ceding the 2024 Games to rival Paris. (Jean-Christophe Bott/Keystone via AP, File)(Photo: The Associated Press)

PARIS (AP) — After failing three times in recent bids, sheer joy was expected from Paris officials when Los Angeles ceded the 2024 Olympics to the City of Lights.

Paris bid leaders, however, opted for a diplomatic approach, stopping short of claiming the 2024 Games were guaranteed to be organized in

less than half the estimated cost of the Rio Olympics and a fraction of the \$51 billion Sochi reportedly spent on the 2014 winter games.

their city.

"Paris 2024 is proud to be working together with the IOC and our friends in Los Angeles to reach a positive solution for both cities, the games and the whole Olympic Movement for 2024 and 2028," bid committee co-chairman Tony Estanguet said. "(The) announcements are a sign of the progress being made and the delivery of a good solution to the IOC members in September in Lima."

The L'Equipe sports newspaper was more enthusiastic on Tuesday, celebrating the French capital's victory by running a front page headline claiming "La Joie est Libre!" — a play of words on the expression "La Voie est Libre," which means the way has been cleared.

Although optimistic, Paris bid leaders remained cautious in their official reactions. That attitude is consistent with their position since launching the bid a little but more than two years ago, which contrasted with the perceived arrogance in previous bids for the 1992, 2008, and 2012 Games.

Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson called the agreement a "win-win-win scenario."

The opportunity to host the Games "is a golden occasion further

strengthening Los Angeles -- not just through bricks and mortar, but through new opportunities for our communities to watch, play and benefit from sport," Wesson said.

The last time it bid, Paris was considered the favorite in the race for the 2012 Olympics, only to lose out to London in a close vote in 2005 following a poor lobbying campaign. This time, they opted for a more humble and sports-driven approach, leaving government officials in a supporting role and making sure all the political hurdles were cleared before going forward.

There was no direct reaction from French president Emmanuel Macron, a strong supporter of the Paris project, and other officials said they would not celebrate until a three-way deal between Los Angeles, Paris and the International Olympic Committee is officially announced on Sept. 13 in Lima, Peru.

Macron's office issued a statement on Tuesday saying that the French president spoke with IOC President Thomas Bach and that France "took note of Los Angeles' decision to bid for 2028 and to find a deal with the IOC and Paris."

"French President Emmanuel Macron welcomes this very important step towards obtaining the games for France in 2024 and

remains very committed to make our country's bid win with all the French, the athletes, and all partners involved," the statement said.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, who played a key role in convincing the IOC that Paris was the right city for 2024 by hammering the message that her city was not interested in hosting the 2028 edition, only said she was confident a "win-win-win" agreement can be secured ahead of the IOC session in Peru.

"Paris and Los Angeles are two amazing global cities that are united in their support of the Olympic cause and we stand together now to help the games thrive in 2024 and 2028," Hidalgo said. "As today's announcement shows, dialogue between the IOC and the two cities is progressing well."

Barring a major hiccup ahead of the IOC session, Paris will be hosting the Olympics for the first time in 100 years. Besides 1924, the French capital also hosted the Olympics in 1900.



L.A. gains financial concessions in return for agreeing to host the 2028 Olympic Games

David Wharton

Initial reaction to Monday's announcement was mixed.

After weeks of intense negotiations with the International Olympic Committee, Los Angeles officials have agreed to host the Summer Games in 2028 — instead of 2024 — in return for a deal they hope will generate hundreds of millions in additional savings and revenues.

The arrangement, which lets Paris go first with the 2024 Games, will bring the world's largest sporting event back to Southern California for a third time.

It could also set a precedent as the IOC made concessions to L.A. that involved sponsorship sales, the retention of any potential surplus and upfront funding for youth sports programs throughout the city.

"This deal was too good to pass up," Mayor Eric Garcetti said during a late Monday afternoon news conference at StubHub Center in Carson.

Andrew Zimbalist, an economist at Smith College in Massachusetts and frequent critic of the Olympic movement, believed L.A. officials "played their cards right."

"They've gotten a bunch of concessions that are significant," Zimbalist said.

Others questioned whether Garcetti and local bid officials could have bargained for more, and whether the public should have been given a voice in the negotiations.

"I wonder if this was a missed opportunity for more input," said Jules Boykoff, who teaches political science at Pacific University in Oregon and has studied previous Games. "What did people want them to ask for?"

The response was more enthusiastic from several Los Angeles City Council members in

attendance at the news conference and from the White House.

"For the first time in a generation, the Olympics are coming back to the United States," President Trump said in a statement. "And I am proud to support LA 2028."

Talks focused on four major issues, beginning with corporate dollars.

The IOC has estimated it will contribute \$1.7 billion of its broadcast and sponsorship revenues to Paris 2024 organizers. L.A. sought a different arrangement that could boost its share to \$2 billion or more in 2028.

Under normal circumstances, host cities begin preparations seven years in advance but do not receive most of the IOC contributions until two years before the Games.

For 2028, the IOC has agreed to give L.A. a \$180-million advance that would cover the organizing committee's costs for an extra four years and pump as much as \$160

million into youth sports throughout the city.

"I want something for the people of L.A. now...I want the excitement to build. — Mayor Eric Garcetti

Mayor Eric Garcetti, center, joins officials and former Olympians posing for a photo after a news conference at the StubHub Center. (Allen J. Schaben / Los Angeles Times)

In Olympic circles, such public benefits are referred to as "legacy" and usually occur only after the Games have finished and left town. Garcetti predicted that youth programs could see IOC funding next year.

"I want something for the people of L.A. now," the mayor said. "I want the excitement to build."

Olympic officials also waived various payments that could ultimately save L.A. tens of millions, but local bid leaders seemed most enthusiastic

about a potential post-Games benefit.

Their \$5.3-billion bid estimate includes a \$487.6-million contingency — money that would be set aside to pay for cost overruns that have plagued recent Games, leaving hosts with substantial deficits.

If the Games finish at or under budget, the \$487-million contingency would convert to a surplus — similar to the one left by the 1984 Los Angeles Games — and L.A. officials have struck a deal to keep most of that money.

The United States Olympic Committee would still take 20% of any surplus, but with the IOC waiving its customary 20%, the city could realize \$100 million or more.

The chance of a surplus is higher than usual because L.A. will not have to spend billions in construction costs by using existing venues such as Staples Center, Pauley Pavilion and the Coliseum.

Further savings would arise from housing athletes and the media at UCLA and USC rather than building expensive villages.

This week ends a tumultuous two

years for the candidate cities and Olympic leaders.

USOC board members originally chose Boston as the U.S. bidder in 2015, but L.A. got back into the picture eight months later when public opposition forced the Massachusetts capital to withdraw.

As other candidates around the world backed off, only L.A. and Paris were left to bid for 2024. The IOC decided that, with two eager candidates in hand, it would name two winners.

Paris pushed back against the idea, but L.A. bid leaders expressed a willingness to talk. They knew the race with Paris would be close and that the U.S. had fallen short in several recent attempts to win the Summer Games.

Negotiations with the IOC picked up over the last few weeks.

"It has been certainly a roller coaster," said L.A. bid chairman Casey Wasserman, adding that IOC officials "showed a real willingness to be thoughtful and creative."

Still, committing to the Games more than a decade in advance comes with considerable risk.

Politics and economies can make huge shifts over that time. The 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games served as an example — a slump in the Brazilian economy, which had been booming a few years earlier, forced organizers to make last-minute cutbacks.

L.A. bid leaders will have to renegotiate contracts with venues throughout the city and adjust its agreement with the City Council, which voted to support the 2024 bid.

After weeks of negotiations with the International Olympic Committee Los Angeles officials have reached a deal to host the 2028 Summer Games. (Video by Allen J. Schaben / Los Angeles Times)

"We will vet the proposal," council President Herb Wesson said. "We'll scrub it, scrub it and re-scrub it."

That process will begin with an ad hoc committee meeting on Friday. Despite his promise of scrutiny, Wesson said he hopes to present a recommendation to the full council next week and win quick approval.

NOlympics, the most vocal coalition opposing the Games, called the decision "a complete miscarriage of anything remotely resembling democracy." The group called for

city officials to "do the right thing and take the appropriate steps ... without cutting corners."

At Monday's news conference, Garcetti and Wasserman focused on the benefits of waiting another four years.

The Crenshaw/LAX Line, the Purple Line Extension and downtown's Regional Connector, which will allow passengers to transfer to several lines, are scheduled to be finished by 2024, according to a Metro spokesman.

Improvements to Los Angeles International Airport could also be done.

In the meantime, L.A.'s deal faces a few more procedural hurdles. In addition to council vetting, it must be approved by the USOC. The deal may also have to be looked at by state legislators, who previously approved financial backstops. IOC members must vote their approval at a mid-September meeting, at which point city officials would finalize the arrangement by signing the revised host city contract.



City gets more than \$2 billion for hosting 2028 Olympics

Josh Peter, USA TODAY Sports

CARSON, Calif. — There was no sense of defeat here on the day Los Angeles learned it would have to wait an extra four years to hold the Olympics.

In fact, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti insisted Southern California got a better deal from the International Olympic Committee even though Paris got the 2024 Summer Games for which Los Angeles had bid.

Garcetti, in a news conference Monday, said waiting until 2028 will

result in hundreds of millions of additional dollars for his city.

Los Angeles will get more than \$2 billion from the IOC, and the money will go toward a \$5.3 billion budget that will leave the city with a surplus, officials said.

"This deal was too good to pass up," Garcetti said Monday at the StubHub Center, adding that a large chunk of money will be used to support youth sports in Southern California.

RELATED:

The budget is comparatively modest for modern Olympics, with the bill for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, reportedly costing \$50 billion. Existing venues are reducing costs in what Garcetti touted as a new model for Olympics and a way to avoid deficits that most recently plagued the 2016 Summer Games in Brazil.

Garcetti also pointed out that L.A. never was the front-runner, with Boston initially selected as the U.S. bid city before Boston's bid fell apart and the United States Olympic Committee awarded the bid to L.A.

"It was a marathon," Garcetti said. "In fact, a couple of times we were counted out of the race. Today we're at the finish line."

It will be more than 11 years before people can cheer for Olympic athletes here, but that didn't seem to bother anyone at what felt as much like a pep rally as a news conference.

"For the hell of it, let's just applaud one more time," said Herb Wesson, president of the the Los Angeles City Council.

BREITBART | Los Angeles Gets Big Bucks to Host 2028 Summer Olympics

by Chriss W. Street1 Aug 2017Newport Beach, CA107

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) revealed Monday that Los Angeles had negotiated a financially lucrative deal to host the 2028 Summer Olympic Games.

As Breitbart News reported last month, the IOC judged Los Angeles and Paris to have equally strong bids to host the 2024 Summer Olympics. Instead of flipping a coin,

the IOC said they would offer one city the right to host the 2024 Summer Games, and the other city would win the right to host the 2028 Summer Games.

Paris claimed that it was only willing to host the 2024 Summer Games. So, according to the *New York Times*, the IOC negotiated a deal for Los Angeles to host the 2028 Summer Games by agreeing to advance \$1.8 billion to the Los Angeles Organizing Committee, plus make another \$180 million in compensatory payments for the four-year delay and \$160 million to pre-fund local youth sports.

In a huge negotiated win for Los Angeles, the IOC also agreed to forfeit its standard 20 percent of any "surplus revenues," generally called profit, generated by the local organizing committee after contingency funds were spent.

Giving up 20 percent of profits would normally be considered a joke, because every host city over the last 5 decades, except Los Angeles, has lost money, and some have gone bankrupt.

But Los Angeles' bid to host the Summer Games was unique, because the L.A. 2024 Olympic Bid

Committee claimed it did not need to build any new permanent venues to host the Summer Games. L.A. 2024 highlighted that Los Angeles made a \$232.5 million profit hosting the 1984 Summer Olympics and estimated it would make hundreds of millions of dollars in surplus by selling \$1.3 to \$1.5 billion of Olympics and Paralympic Games tickets, plus booking at least \$4.8 billion in advertising and sponsorship revenues.

Breitbart News reported that a recent study by Beacon Economics LLC and University of California Riverside predicted that Los

Angeles could see a \$9.5 billion economic boost, including \$4.4 billion in worker earnings and over \$152 million in additional tax revenues, if the city was awarded the 2024 Summer Olympics.

As the most media-savvy town on the planet, Los Angeles will also benefit from NBCUniversal acquiring the exclusive broadcast rights for all Olympic events held between 2022 and 2032 for \$7.75 billion.

The City of Los Angeles was supposed to be at risk for \$6 billion in spending necessary to host the 2024 Summer Olympic Games, but the IOC payments to accept hosting the 2028 Summer Games

will now drastically reduce any risk of financial loss to the city.



Bershidsky : Germany's Auto Industry Is Built on Collusion

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Leonid Bershidsky

The latest attempt to cut into Chancellor Angela Merkel's formidable electoral lead is unwisely betting that Germans will forget a significant chunk of German history.

The nation's three big carmakers -- Volkswagen, Daimler and BMW -- are accused of colluding on dozens of technology-related matters. They allegedly agreed to make urea tanks too small for effective purification of diesel exhaust, among other moves that are helping to create a national furor.

A majority of Germans is now in favor of banning diesel cars that don't live up to modern emission standards, and most say the car industry, until recently a pillar of national pride, is no longer trustworthy. On Wednesday, the car industry chiefs will attend a "diesel summit" called by the government to look for solutions. That's part of Merkel's pre-election strategy, though she's not scheduled to attend. Rivals, especially the Greens and the Social Democrats, are claiming she's been too cozy with the industry bosses over the years, which makes her culpable for the seemingly endless stream of scandals. The chancellor needs to show she's got things under control so she can hold on to her double-digit lead in the polls.

A ban on old diesels -- rejecting industry calls for a software fix as an alternative -- now looks especially likely because of a Friday ruling by a Stuttgart court, which upheld an environmental group's demand for such a ban in the city. Other German municipalities are likely to follow if higher courts uphold the decision. But Merkel's government isn't likely to take drastic action to discourage carmakers from working together for one

simple reason: It's the German way, no matter how much noise her opponents try to drum up.

In 1942, Heinrich Kronstein, an eminent German legal scholar who had fled to the U.S. to escape Hitler's persecution, penned two articles on the development of cartels in Germany. He described the birth of cartels in conjunction with Otto von Bismarck's protectionist policies, introduced in the late 1870 and credited with the explosive development of German industry before World War I. Companies in most industries teamed up to create common sales structures, eliminating domestic competition and making German industries internationally competitive because of their ability to dump. In 1901, 450 of such cartels existed. They made Germany a globally dominant industrial power, not just because of the way they abused their market position but because of their ability to pool research.

"For a limited period of time these research laboratories in Germany, made possible by high tariffs and the cartel system, became the most precious raw material Germany had," Kronstein wrote.

Public opinion and the courts were against unbridled competition and in favor of the cartels. The result: German exports grew exponentially.

The arrangement wasn't without its costs, though. Kronstein wrote:

The immediate price to be paid by Germany for this staggering development seemed not too high from the point of view of the prevailing Prussian philosophy. The freedom of action of the individual disappeared more and more. Free competition, where it existed, became a fight for quotas in the future cartel, while the liberal economists in the universities closed their eyes and pretended to live in a

period of free trade. Each device for the protection of the individual became unconsciously a device for control by cartel and monopoly power. The fact that freedom of action disappeared in the sphere of life in which it was supposed to be most predominant had its effect on the entire philosophy of every man whatever his place might be in the nation.

Even after World War I was lost and the first antitrust legislation adopted, the only way to fight German cartels was to do so in the 1930s, suing Telefunken -- the joint venture of Siemens and AEG -- and then striking a new cartel agreement that shared control of the German and Dutch radio industries.

The Nazis, with their attempts to control prices, were all for cartels. They made businesses join forces when other kinds of stimulus didn't help. "Cartels were believed to be a form of economic organization far superior to unrestricted competition," Wilfried Feldenkirchen wrote in a 1992 study of German competition policy.

After World War II, the U.S. pushed Germany to monopolize; its aid came at the price of establishing a liberal economic order. But German business resisted those efforts. It took years for antitrust legislation to be enacted. Feldenkirchen wrote:

US pressure was the one coherent, driving force, but it had contradictory results, with the German government wishing to resist American demands at least in detail. The breakup of the vertical combines in heavy industry very soon led to increased horizontal concentration in that field.

The German business culture led to a system of interlocking directorships at big companies that still exists today. All sorts of intra-industry agreements -- not least

dealing with research and development -- sprang up, exempt from antitrust law until 2005 as "rationalization cartels" that could lead to more efficiency through common industry standards. Under the current European Union-dictated prohibition on "all agreements, concerted practices or decisions by associations of undertakings that have as their object or effect a restriction of competition," such arrangements are difficult to defend, so Volkswagen and Daimler have attempted to be proactive in reporting the car industry's dozens of technology working groups to the German and EU authorities.

The rules have changed, but the deep-down German belief that companies in the same industry can and should work together to boost their efficiency and international competitiveness hasn't gone anywhere. It would be wrong to expect Merkel, a German conservative, to try to uproot it and go to war against the carmakers. "It's about criticizing what has to be criticized at this point, but always in the awareness that this is a strategically important industry for Germany," Ulrike Demmer, a spokesperson for Merkel, said on Monday.

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Germany has tried hard to erase various aspects of its history, but it's impossible to wipe the slate completely clean -- especially since certain traditions have contributed to Germany's current economic might. As the car industry tries to come to terms with tougher regulation and technological change, Merkel's government will try to steer it through the crisis as gently as it can, even though it's politically difficult.



U.K. Immigration Stance Highlights Government Rift

Jenny Gross

LONDON—Free

movement of people between the U.K. and the European Union will end when the U.K. leaves the bloc in March 2019, Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said Monday, underscoring divisions within the

government over future immigration policy.

Ministers have agreed over the past week that the U.K. will seek a multiyear transition arrangement with the EU to give businesses time to adjust to Brexit, but they have expressed differing views about

which EU rules would continue to apply—particularly on immigration.

James Slack, Mrs. May's spokesman, said free movement, which gives citizens of the bloc the right to live and work in any EU country without a visa, would end when Britain departs the EU but that further details were up for

negotiation. Talks got formally under way in June.

"Other elements of the post-Brexit immigration system will be brought forward in due course," he said. "It would be wrong to speculate on what these might look like or to suggest that free movement will continue as it is now."

Mrs. May's spokesman's comments, if followed through, would appear to rule out the least disruptive type of transition deal with the EU—and also the easiest to negotiate—under which the U.K. would stay temporarily inside the bloc's single market and its customs union. The EU requires countries to agree to free movement of people if they want to reap the benefits of free movement of trade and services within the bloc.

Businesses and others have been eager for certainty on the U.K.'s approach as they make future plans, but cabinet members have sent mixed signals.



Free EU movement for British citizens to end in 2019

The Christian Science Monitor

July 31, 2017 London—The automatic right of European Union citizens to live and work in Britain will end in March 2019 with Brexit, Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said on Monday, after her ministers publicly differed over the shape of the divorce with the EU.

Since Ms. May's failed gamble on a snap election last month, the future of Brexit has been thrown into question with squabbling between her ministers over the pace, tone, and terms of Britain's departure from the club it joined in 1973.

May, who on Monday interrupted a three-week holiday to attend a World War I commemoration ceremony, has faced public pressure to temper her plans for a clean break from the EU.

The level of discord is such that one opposition politician spoke of "civil war" within the government over Brexit and some of the bloc's most powerful politicians have even raised the prospect of Britain scrapping Brexit.

May has repeatedly said Brexit will take place as scheduled in late March 2019.

But the Archbishop of Canterbury said the chance of this was "infinitesimally small" because political wrangling will prevent the detailed work that is needed.

Ministers have been bolder in voicing opinions on Brexit since Mrs. May's Conservative Party lost its parliamentary majority in a June election. While she was vacationing in Italy, Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond last week gave several fresh details about Britain's Brexit plans, including that the U.K.'s relationship with the EU could look similar to what it does now for a number of years after leaving.

Mr. Hammond, who supported staying in the EU, said he wanted to avoid a "cliff-edge" scenario where goods and people would stop being able to move across Britain's borders as soon as the U.K. left the bloc.

Justin Welby, who is the spiritual head of the Anglican communion of millions of Christians globally and sits in the House of Lords, said domestic political wrangling would impede the detailed work that is needed for Brexit.

In response, May's spokesman said the government remained committed to the exit timetable.

Immigration is hot issue

Immigration from the EU is one of the most contentious issues because the economy relies on imported labor but many British voters are angry over what they consider to be uncontrolled immigration.

"Free movement will end in March 2019," May's spokesman told reporters, adding that the government had already set out some details including proposals on EU citizens' rights after Brexit.

"Other elements of the post-Brexit immigration system will be brought forward in due course. It would be wrong to speculate on what these might look like or to suggest that free movement will continue as it is now."

The British government has for years failed to meet a pledge to reduce net migration below 100,000 a year. May's spokesman said it would take time to get the numbers down, but the government was committed to doing so.

He also said rules affecting Britain's relations with the bloc would be implemented gradually by 2022 and that it would be some time before full immigration controls could be introduced.

Over the weekend, Liam Fox, trade secretary, said in an interview with the Sunday Times that he doubted free movement of people could continue for up to three years after the U.K. leaves the EU. "I have not been involved in any discussion on that, nor have I signified my agreement to anything like that," said Mr. Fox, who supported leaving the EU.

Finance minister Philip Hammond said last week that there should be no immediate change to immigration rules when Britain leaves the bloc, and interior minister Amber Rudd said there would be no 'cliff edge' on leaving the EU.

But trade minister Liam Fox said allowing free movement after Brexit would not "keep faith" with the referendum result and that the government had not reached a consensus on keeping open EU immigration for a transitional period.

The length of a potential transition period to allow business to adapt to the potential upheaval caused by Brexit is another contentious issue. There has been no clear guidance from May's team on how long the transition should be.

Brexit 'civil war'

Vince Cable, leader of the pro-EU Liberal Democrats said the "civil war" within May's cabinet over Brexit was now so serious she should return from her holiday and take charge.

"There are more government positions than there are cabinet ministers. The government is in total disarray. Unless the cabinet can agree a position, how can it possibly negotiate Brexit on behalf of Britain with the EU?" he said.

The EU's top Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier told EU ambassadors last week that negotiations on the future relationship between Britain and the EU are now less likely to

Tony Travers, politics professor at the London School of Economics, played down the significance of the Downing Street spokesman's words. He said that although the comments appear to contradict those of Mr. Hammond, in practice, they may not be that different.

"Free movement is ending, but that wouldn't preclude reintroducing something that isn't the same as free movement minus some tiny element," Mr. Travers said, referring to the transition period. "It's a very nuanced world of being able to assert everything changes when it doesn't."

start in October due to a lack of progress at the initial stage of talks about the breakup.

Mr. Hammond was also reported as saying Britain does not intend to lower taxes far below the European average in order to remain competitive after Brexit, contradicting comments he himself had made earlier in the year.

The pro-Brexit UK Independence Party said remain-supporting ministers were now "actively promoting confusion and uncertainty" in order to undermine Brexit negotiations and seek to reverse the process.

May's spokesman said there was broad agreement across government and within her team of ministers about the need to make Brexit as smooth as possible. The government position on Brexit remains as set out by May in a January speech, he added.

He cited comments from that speech in which May said that it was "in no-one's interests for there to be a cliff edge for business" but that this did not mean seeking "some form of unlimited transitional status."

The details of any implementation period are to be negotiated but the government is not looking for an "off-the-shelf model," he said, after a Financial Times report that Hammond hoped for such an option.



Pentagon Offers Plan to Arm Ukraine

The U.S. Pentagon and State Department have devised plans to supply Ukraine with antitank missiles and other weaponry and are seeking White House approval, U.S. officials said, as Kiev battles

Russia-backed separatists and ties between Moscow and Washington fray.

American military officials and diplomats say the arms, which they characterized as defensive, are meant to deter aggressive actions

by Moscow, which the U.S. and others say has provided tanks and other sophisticated armaments as well as military advisers to rebels fighting the Kiev government.

Since Russia invaded and annexed Ukraine's Crimean peninsula in

2014 and then began supporting Russian-speaking insurgents in the country's east, Washington, wary of escalating the conflict, has largely limited its support for Kiev's military to so-called non-lethal aid and training.

A senior administration official said there has been no decision on the armaments proposal and it wasn't discussed at a high-level White House meeting on Russia last week. The official said President Donald Trump hasn't been briefed on the plan and his position isn't known.

Some U.S. and Ukrainian officials said they expect it could be months before the White House makes a final determination.

Any decision to provide arms to Ukraine would come against a backdrop of severely deteriorating relations between Washington and Moscow. Russia said it would expel hundreds of American diplomats after the U.S. Congress last week approved new economic sanctions on Russia.

A Pentagon spokeswoman, Lt. Col. Michelle L. Baldanza, said the U.S. has not "ruled out the option" of providing "lethal defensive weapons to Ukraine." U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis has endorsed the plan, according to U.S. officials.

A State Department spokesman didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

When the Obama administration considered supplying arms to Ukraine, it faced considerable opposition from German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other allied leaders and instead provided Kiev with short-range radar, night-vision goggles and other equipment.

Germany and France remain deeply skeptical about providing arms to Ukraine, fearing that such moves

would raise tensions and deepen the conflict there. But U.S. officials said they expect allies, possibly including the U.K., Canada, Poland and Lithuania to be open to increased military support.

"It is really important we don't inflame the situation," said British National Security Adviser Mark Sedwell. "There has been quite a lot of agitation from across the border in the east."

Roughly 10,000 people have died in the Ukraine conflict since 2014, according to the United Nations. Russian support for the rebels was thrown into sharp relief when a Malaysian passenger jet was shot down in July 2014 by a Russian-made surface-to-air missile, according to international investigators.

U.S. officials say they worry that the conflict has intensified, with a rising number of cease-fire violations as progress on peace efforts has faltered.

"The level of violence is up a bit of late," said Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, the top U.S. and NATO military commander. "The Russians provide equipment, some of their most modern equipment, and they provide proxy forces with advisers."

Russian officials have long denied supporting separatists and criticized Western efforts to train the Ukrainian military. Russian officials have said in recent days that any U.S. move to send weapons to Ukraine would further impair peace efforts.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Kittrie : How U.S. Allies Undermine NATO

Orde F. Kittrie

approximately \$180 billion was invested in 2,099 American companies.

Norway, a NATO member, divested even though these companies produce nuclear weapons only for the U.S. government, and NATO's 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review describes U.S. nuclear weapons as "the supreme guarantee" of members' security. The hypocrisy goes further: In 2016 Norway authorized its pension fund to invest in Iranian government bonds—even though Iran has sponsored terrorism for decades and is a patron of Bashar Assad's atrocities in Syria.

So far only Norway has divested from companies for producing nuclear weapons. But the government pension funds of Denmark, France and the Netherlands have joined Norway in divesting from American companies that produce other weapons stocked

Under the Pentagon and State Department proposal, the U.S. would provide anti-tank weapons, most likely Javelin missiles, as well as possibly anti-aircraft weapons, in addition to other arms. Ukraine has long sought Javelins to counter Russian-made armored vehicles in rebel-held areas.

U.S. officials, however, said the plan would be to deploy the anti-tank missiles with Ukrainian troops stationed away from the front lines of the conflict—part of an effort by policy makers to limit the risks of escalation and defuse criticism that the moves could encourage offensive action by Kiev.

Javelin missiles and launchers are lightweight and usually carried by two-man teams, so they are highly mobile.

Should Ukraine use the weapons improperly, Washington could decide to withdraw its support or technical assistance.

Kurt Volker, named U.S. special representative for Ukraine in July, met European officials last week and said a decision to provide "defensive weapons" was likely but not imminent, according to people involved in the discussions.

Officials said Mr. Volker believes there is a narrow window for progress in Ukraine over the next months before Russia's presidential elections, due in March 2018, but that a change in the situation can only be brought by raising the costs for Moscow of continued intervention in Ukraine.

In public comments, Mr. Volker has played down the notion that supplying weapons to Ukraine would escalate the conflict with Russia.

A senior Ukrainian official said Monday that the fact of the Pentagon's proposal could help persuade Russia to scale back actions in Ukraine's east. The official also said it was widely accepted in Kiev that any advanced weapons from the U.S. would be used only in an "emergency" and not during regular combat with separatist forces.

U.S. and European officials are divided on how Moscow would respond to new arms shipments. Some believe it would push Moscow back to the bargaining table and others think it would prompt the Russian military to escalate the situation further.

But with violence rising in Ukraine and separatists making moves such as declaring their own government for the country, some Western officials think there is little to lose by trying to increase pressure.

The Trump administration has tried to find common ground with Russia. Moscow and Washington have had limited success in creating a safe zone in southwestern Syria and are eyeing other such zones.

But broader cooperation has become deeply complicated by Congressional investigations into Moscow's interference in the U.S.'s 2016 presidential election and alleged Russian contacts with the Trump campaign.

The U.S. spends heavily to defend Europe, yet most North Atlantic Treaty Organization members don't spend 2% of their GDP on defense, as the alliance's guidelines call for. Worse, many of these free riders also punish U.S. companies for manufacturing weapons used by the Pentagon to defend NATO allies and other countries. Specifically, several NATO member governments have divested from or even criminalized the purchase of stock in U.S. defense contractors.

Between 2005 and 2013 Norway's government pension fund divested from U.S. defense contractors such as Boeing, Honeywell, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman "because they are involved in production of nuclear weapons." The fund, controlled by Norway's Finance Ministry, is worth some \$900 billion. At the end of 2015,

by the U.S. military. These countries have targeted General Dynamics, Raytheon and Textron for manufacturing cluster munitions and land mines, in some cases after production reportedly has stopped.

Six European countries—NATO members Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Spain, plus nonmember Liechtenstein—make it illegal for their nationals to invest in companies that produce cluster munitions or land mines. In Switzerland, citizens can be imprisoned for five years for direct and indirect financing, including stock purchases, of companies that manufacture nuclear weapons, cluster munitions or land mines.

While these weapons often pose a threat to civilians even after conflicts end, the U.S. government deems them necessary. The Obama administration acknowledged in 2014 that land mines are needed to

protect South Korea. The State Department has long said the elimination of cluster munitions "from U.S. stockpiles would put the lives of its soldiers and those of its coalition partners at risk."

Many NATO governments joined the 2008 international treaty to ban cluster munitions and the 1997 agreement to forbid land mines. Boycotts targeting companies producing these weapons derive from expansive interpretations of particular provisions in these accords. Both treaties say that "never under any circumstances" will a country "assist, encourage, or induce" anyone to engage in activities such as the development or production of the banned weapons.

The treaty banning nuclear weapons, which was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on July 7, includes similar language. Many of the 122 governments that voted for

the nuclear treaty will likely divest from and criminalize purchase of stock in nuclear-weapons manufacturers. No NATO government supported the nuclear ban treaty. Yet Norway's divestment from stock in nuclear-weapons manufacturers shows the fervor generated by movements against disfavored weapons can spur such boycotts even if a country ultimately doesn't support the treaty.

The danger of European economic warfare against Israel—including the

Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement—deservedly has received considerable attention. In contrast, European economic warfare against U.S. companies for implementing U.S. government policy has avoided the spotlight and elicited virtually no response from Washington. This must change. The targeted U.S. firms together employ hundreds of thousands of American workers. For allied governments to penalize such companies for filling U.S. government orders is unacceptable. It could even increase

costs to the U.S. taxpayer, who ultimately would pay extra legal or financing costs associated with producing these weapons.

If left unchecked, this problem will grow. Norway's pension fund has divested from Wal-Mart, America's largest employer, for "serious violations of human rights," according to the fund's website. The fund has also divested from two U.K. companies for producing Britain's nuclear arsenal and one

Israeli company for involvement with Israel's antiterrorism fence.

Congress and the executive branch should spotlight, and vigorously oppose, ally and partner government boycotts that target the defense industrial base of the U.S. and key allies such as Israel and the U.K. Governments must know that such boycotts, if continued, will subject them and their companies to commensurate penalties.

INTERNATIONAL

The New York Times UNE - Russia's Military Drills Near NATO Border Raise Fears of Aggression

Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt

WASHINGTON — Russia is preparing to send as many as 100,000 troops to the eastern edge of NATO territory at the end of the summer, one of the biggest steps yet in the military buildup undertaken by President Vladimir V. Putin and an exercise in intimidation that recalls the most ominous days of the Cold War.

The troops are conducting military maneuvers known as Zapad, Russian for "west," in Belarus, the Baltic Sea, western Russia and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. The drills will feature a reconstituted armored force named for a storied Soviet military unit, the First Guards Tank Army. Its establishment represents the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union that so much offensive power has been concentrated in a single command.

The military exercise, planned for many months, is not a reaction to sweeping new economic sanctions on Russia that Congress passed last week. So far, Russia has retaliated against the sanctions by forcing the expulsion of several hundred employees in American diplomatic posts in the country.

But the move is part of a larger effort by Mr. Putin to shore up Russia's military prowess, and comes against the backdrop of an increasingly assertive Russia. Beyond Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election in support of the Trump campaign, which has seized attention in the United States, its military has in recent years deployed forces to Syria, seized Crimea and intervened in eastern Ukraine, rattled the Baltic States with snap

exercises and buzzed NATO planes and ships.

Punishing sanctions by the United States and European allies that have isolated Russia further have done nothing to stop Mr. Putin's saber-rattling, as illustrated by the long-scheduled Zapad exercise.

Even more worrying, top American military officers say, is that the maneuvers could be used as a pretext to increase Russia's military presence in Belarus, a central European nation that borders three critical NATO allies: Poland, Lithuania and Latvia.

"The great concern is they're not going to leave, and that's not paranoia," Gen. Tony Thomas, the head of the United States Special Operations Command, told a national security conference in Aspen, Colo., in July.

Peter B. Zwack, a retired one-star Army general who was the American defense attaché in Moscow from 2012 to 2014, said: "First and foremost, the messaging is, 'We're watching you; we're strong; we've learned a lot; don't mess with Russia.'"

Western military officials caution that the United States and Russia are not on the brink of war. But they expressed concern that the heightened Russian military activity could lead to unintended confrontations.

For this installment of the Zapad maneuvers, a Cold War relic revived in 1999 and held again in 2009 and 2013, Russia has requisitioned enough rail cars to carry 4,000 loads of tanks and other heavy equipment to and from Belarus.

The Russians already have about 1,000 air defense troops and communications personnel stationed in Belarus, and logistical teams are surveying training sites there. By mid-August, advance elements of the thousands of Russian Army, airborne and air defense troops that are to participate in the exercise are expected to arrive. The rest of the force is expected to reach Belarus by early September ahead of the Zapad exercises, scheduled for Sept. 14 to 20.

The United States is taking precautions, including sending 600 American paratroopers to NATO's three Baltic members for the duration of the Zapad exercise and delaying the rotation of a United States-led battle group in Poland.

"Look, we'll be ready; we'll be prepared," said Lt. Gen. Frederick B. Hodges, the head of United States Army forces in Europe. "But we're not going to be up on the parapets waiting for something to happen."

In 2014, Russia's stealthy forays into eastern Ukraine and its rapid capture of Crimea were seen as skillful exercises in "hybrid warfare," a combination of cyberwarfare, a powerful disinformation campaign and the use of highly trained special operation troops and local proxy forces.

But there is nothing subtle about the tank-heavy unit at the heart of the coming Zapad exercise.

The First Guards Tank Army, made up mainly of forces transferred from other units, including elite motorized and tank divisions near Moscow, has an extensive pedigree. The unit battled the Germans during World War II on the Eastern Front and eventually in Berlin before becoming

part of the Soviet force that occupied Germany. In 1968, it participated in the invasion of Czechoslovakia to crush the Prague Spring.

After the end of the Cold War, the unit was withdrawn to Smolensk, near the border with Belarus, before being disbanded in 1998. But it was reconstituted by Mr. Putin to give the Russian military more offensive punch and present a visible demonstration of Russian power.

"That name was chosen for a reason," said Philip M. Breedlove, a retired four-star Air Force general who served as NATO commander. "It sends a very clear message to the Baltics and Poland."

In addition, the Russians have fielded a new motorized division near Smolensk, close to the border with Belarus, which could be used in conjunction with the tank unit. In combination with the highly mobile tank army, that force has about 800 tanks, more than 300 artillery pieces and a dozen Iskander tactical missile launchers.

That is more tanks than NATO has in active units deployed in the Baltic States, Poland and Germany put together, not including armor in storage that would be used by reinforcements sent from the United States, noted Phillip A. Karber, the president of the Potomac Foundation, who has studied Russian military operations in and around Ukraine.

"There is only one reason you would create a Guards Tank Army, and that is as an offensive striking force," General Hodges said. "This is not something for homeland security. That does not mean that they are automatically going to do it, but in

terms of intimidation it is a means of putting pressure on allies."

Mr. Karber cautioned against exaggerating the First Guards Tank Army's capability, noting that not all of its units were fully manned and that some of the most modern tanks earmarked for it have not arrived.

President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, in dark coat, among those watching the 2013 exercises. Alexey Drugynin/Ria Novosti, via European Pressphoto Agency

But if fully deployed into Belarus, he said, it will be a powerful offensive formation and a way for the Russian military to rapidly project power westward, which is all the more important for Moscow. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant that Russian forces lost Belarus and Ukraine as buffers.

"Just the presence of the First Guards Tank Army near the Polish border would put NATO on the horns of a dilemma," Mr. Karber said. "Does NATO reinforce the

Baltics or defend eastern Poland? NATO does not have enough forces to do both in a short period of time. It adds to the political pressure Russia can bring to bear to keep the Baltic nations and Poland in line."

The Russians have also announced that the First Guards Tank Army will be the first formation to receive the T-14 Armata tank, a new infantry fighting vehicle, as well as advanced air defense and electronic warfare equipment.

A more immediate concern, however, is whether Russia will use the Zapad exercise to keep Belarus in line. Belarus has long worked closely with Moscow, and its air defense units are integrated with Russia's to the east. But with friction between the nation's autocratic president, Aleksandr G. Lukashenko, and Mr. Putin have come reports that Belarus is reluctant to host more Russian forces permanently.

As part of the maneuvers, units of the First Guards Tank Army are

expected to establish a forward command post in western Belarus, and to hold exercises in training areas near Brest, on the Polish border, and Grodno, near Poland and Lithuania.

Russian officials have told NATO that the maneuvers will be far smaller than Western officials are anticipating and will involve fewer than 13,000 troops. But NATO officials say the exercise is intended to test Russia's contingency plans for a major conflict with the alliance and will also involve Russian civilian agencies.

"We have every reason to believe that it may be substantially more troops participating than the official reported numbers," Jens Stoltenberg, NATO's secretary general, said in July.

Adding to the concern, the Russians have yet to agree that international observers can monitor the Zapad exercise. American officials have long said that monitoring is important, given the difficulty of

Western intelligence in determining whether Russian military activity is merely an exercise or a preparation for an armed intervention.

The United States, in contrast, allowed Russian, Chinese and even North Korean observers to monitor a recent Army exercise, called Saber Guardian, in Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria.

At least two battalions of First Guards units, or some 3,000 armored troops, are expected to participate in the Belarus maneuvers. The total number of Russian troops, security personnel and civilian officials in the broader exercise is expected to range from 60,000 to as many as 100,000.

The question NATO officials are asking is whether all of the troops and equipment in Belarus will leave.

Said General Hodges, "I am very interested in what goes in and what comes out."

The Washington Post

Editorial : We're on the road to a new Cold War

THE UNITED STATES and Russia have descended to a new low point in relations, with waves of sanctions and escalating retaliation. Twenty-five years after the Cold War ended, relations are back in a deep freeze. What happened?

The current tension did not come about because the United States suddenly wanted its old adversary back. What happened is a response to bad choices taken by President Vladimir Putin of Russia. These choices were made deliberately in Moscow, perhaps for Mr. Putin's own reasons of domestic politics and foreign policy. They are the main reason for the tension that now exists.

Mr. Putin chose to seize Crimea from Ukraine, annex it and then instigate an armed insurrection in

southeastern Ukraine in 2014, violating all post-World War II norms of national sovereignty. The war in the Donbas region was a tactic by Mr. Putin to inject further instability into Ukraine after Ukraine's president, Putin ally Viktor Yanukovych, fled his palace in the face of mass protest. Mr. Putin was aggrieved at Ukraine's decision to sign a pact with the European Union, but Ukraine is not a vassal of Russia, and Mr. Putin's claims to a sphere of influence are untenable. The sanctions imposed by the United States and Europe were a response to Mr. Putin's ill-considered impulse to use violence as a tool of intimidation and coercion.

Major national and political news as it breaks.

Another poor and deliberate choice was to interfere with the U.S.

election campaign. Mr. Putin cannot escape responsibility for Russian attempts to damage the candidacy of former secretary of state Hillary Clinton and, perhaps, tilt the election to Donald Trump. We know that Mr. Putin seethed over Ms. Clinton's outspoken support for the principle of free speech during the 2011-2013 protests against him, but he is altogether wrong to think the United States engineered the unrest. Mr. Putin and his aides cynically deny they attempted to interfere in the U.S. election, but surely they know exactly what occurred and how. The sanctions imposed by President Barack Obama last December and recently tightened by Congress did not appear out of thin air. They are a logical response to Mr. Putin's attempt to meddle in American democracy.

Have these choices had positive consequences for Russia or global stability? Mr. Putin behaves as though he believes Russia is walking tall. Perhaps in his zero-sum world, he takes satisfaction in the chaos rippling through U.S. politics, but his tactics have backfired badly in both Ukraine and the United States. And Mr. Putin's choices have been costly for Russia, its economy and its people.

We have long believed that U.S.-Russian engagement is essential to avert miscalculation, and it remains important for both Washington and Moscow to keep talking. But Mr. Putin should not expect the West to suddenly forgive or forget his bad choices. He would be wiser to deal with the underlying source of tension than to sit around plotting new ways to escalate it.



If Putin Wanted to Step Up His Fight With America, You'd Know It

It should be obvious that the looming U.S. sanctions against Russia will not, as Secretary of State Rex Tillerson optimistically suggested last week, propel Moscow to seek improvements in its relations with Washington. Just the opposite: The sanctions, which have not even yet been signed into law, have already prompted the Kremlin to end the one-sided truce with the United States that had held since the election of Donald Trump and to hit back at American interests. Last

Friday, Russia announced that it was stripping the United States of two diplomatic properties and would demand cuts to U.S. Embassy staff within the country. On Sunday, it made clear that it wasn't messing around: Out of about 1,200 Embassy employees, 755 — diplomats and staff members — would have to be gone by Sept. 1.

These are, to be sure, serious measures. And yet Vladimir Putin is not really behaving like a man who has entirely given up on a relationship with America. His

moves this past weekend were deliberate, rather than spontaneous, acts of anger. Putin has made a point of targeting the U.S. government, rather than American business interests in Russia. He has specifically indicated that he is not considering more restrictions against U.S. interests, for now. He probably wants to see how Washington's latest sanctions legislation will operate in practice before deciding on his next move.

The Russian president has never been shy about venting his anger at

those whom he considers Russia's enemies in the United States, as he did last week on a visit to Finland, where he called the sanctions bill "unacceptable" and said it was "destroying international relations and international law." However, he is also careful not to burn all bridges.

What Putin sees in the United States is a country undergoing three monumental crises.

What Putin sees in the United States is a country undergoing three monumental crises. The first is a

cold war between Trump and his detractors that has all but paralyzed the U.S. government. The second is an even more fundamental conflict between the ever-richer elites and a wide section of the American people whose living standards have stagnated for decades. The former conflict may be resolved within two to four years, via impeachment or new elections, but the latter will take much longer to be sorted out. The third is a crisis in U.S. foreign policy: a conflict between those who want continued American global leadership and those who seek retrenchment. This conflict may take the longest of all to resolve itself — and until the United States decides what sort of country it wants to be on all these fronts, we can reasonably expect the Russian president to tread with caution.

The 2016 election and its aftermath have not only stunned observers but offered some important revelations about the United States. The country's political establishment, for the last 120 years a model of self-assuredness and solidity, has begun to lose self-confidence. The elites' sagging self-esteem is evident in their bewildered acceptance of the idea that U.S. democracy is vulnerable to outside meddling and ineradicable suspicion that the elected president and those loyal to him may have colluded with a foreign country. The establishment's prevalent anxiety that Russian propaganda, in the form of the media outlets RT and Sputnik, little known as they are in the United States, could sway the American public's attitudes betrays a lack of confidence in the U.S. electorate.

Trump's election has also magnified the crisis in U.S. foreign policy that preceded him. The United States began turning inward in the aftermath of George W. Bush's disastrous presidency. Barack Obama led the retrenchment operation; Trump

has merely continued it in his typically disruptive manner. Of course, there is a difference: Whereas Obama tried to cover U.S. withdrawal with U.S.-inspired and supported international action, Trump the nationalist has dropped the camouflage.

For a former KGB officer like Putin, these are useful pieces of intelligence. A country in the throes of multiple crises, both insecure and confused, is inherently dangerous. The ongoing political warfare in the United States, has, in Putin's view, resulted in "Russia" becoming a weapon in the hands of those who want to destroy Trump. Even when this particular domestic crisis is settled, Russia will remain toxic in the United States for a decade or more. An embattled U.S. president can always turn to real weapons to strike at opponents abroad to improve his prospects at home. Bill Clinton did it by bombing Iraq during his impeachment hearings — so why not Donald Trump? He has done it in Syria, where Russia is deeply engaged, and might do it again in North Korea, thus bringing real war to Russia's far eastern doorstep. The Kremlin has to take all this into account while deciding on its U.S. policy.

Amid the present chaos, it makes sense for the countries viewed as challengers to the United States on the world stage to allow it to refocus on its domestic issues while quietly pursuing their own agendas and above all avoiding direct confrontation with the still overwhelmingly powerful global hegemon. This is precisely what China is doing. The same would be a sensible course for Russia, too; however, Moscow's actions in Ukraine, and later in Syria, along with the hack of the Democratic National Committee last year, have resulted in a growing confrontation with the United States, making the quiet pursuit of its own affairs

impossible for Russia. And so, under the circumstances, carefully targeted countersanctions, limited in scope, are something of a next best option

Putin has publicly conceded that any real improvement in U.S.-Russian relations is safely blocked for the foreseeable future.

Putin has publicly conceded that any real improvement in U.S.-Russian relations is safely blocked for the foreseeable future. Trump and Tillerson can have long and substantive discussions with Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, but delivering results is a different matter: A powerful coalition of the U.S. Congress, the Defense Department, the intelligence community, and the bulk of the mainstream media has embraced a strategy of piling pressure on Russia until it cracks. The sanctions that will soon become U.S. law are certainly not the last.

Putin acted carefully this weekend; he must continue to do so in the months to come. He understands the vast asymmetries between Russia and America. He knows that the arms race with the United States undermined the Soviet economy; a repeat of it would kill Russia's. He likely realizes that self-imposed isolation, via sanctions on Western companies, would be much worse for Russia than any U.S.-driven attempt to isolate it from without. He should see that fanning xenophobia and anti-Americanism at home would hardly bring any benefits but instead would hurt relations with other countries, not just the United States, and retard Russia's development still further. The Soviet Union tried to deal with the United States from a position of an equal, which it was not, and eventually quit the stage; the Russian Federation, starting from a position of weakness, has to be smarter. Putin, the judo fighter, certainly gets it.

To be smarter, Russia needs to continue to target its U.S. policies precisely, sending different messages to different stakeholders. It is one thing to retaliate against the U.S. government's interests; it is another to go after American businesses in Russia. Russia needs to deal with the U.S. military but on the understanding that the only thing that can and must be achieved is avoidance of a kinetic collision between the two nuclear powers' armed forces. The U.S. intelligence community will remain an adversary, like in the days of the Cold War, but at some point the need to deal with the growing threat from each other's cyberweapons should bring the adversaries to the negotiating table.

There are many differences between the Cold War and the current U.S.-Russian confrontation. A salient one is that this confrontation is still essentially confined to the political and governmental spheres. Russia needs to keep it that way, making sure that, aside from the sanctions regime, trade, scientific and technological exchanges, and cultural and humanitarian ties with the United States are affected as little as possible. Russia's conflict is with (most of) Washington, not with the rest of the United States. That conflict, in a nutshell, is about the world order and America's — and Russia's — place and role in it. That conflict will ultimately be resolved not in a U.S.-Russian confrontation but by what happens internally in both countries and by what others — above all China, but also others: Europe, India et al. — will be able to achieve. At some point, America and Russia might cease to be adversaries and become "normal," if unequal, rivals. In the meantime, it is vital for the whole world that they do not inadvertently become true enemies.



Galeotti : Putin is in a corner, trying not to look weak

Mark Galeotti

(CNN)Vladimir Putin's counter to new US sanctions on Russia was curiously out of date.

While hyped as a sign that the Kremlin had both lost patience with President Trump and was still willing to show its teeth, it probably better demonstrates

Moscow's diminishing range of options than anything else.

The US sanctions are directed toward hitting Russia's energy infrastructure in response to its alleged interference in the 2016 US elections. By contrast, the Kremlin is

demanding that the Americans cut their diplomatic missions staff in Russia by 755, bringing them down to the same numbers as Moscow's people in Washington.

There is a strange asymmetry, given that in the past sanctions and responses have tended to mirror each other, not least for symbolic impact.

Therefore, it is likely that these were moves originally drawn up in reply to

Barack Obama's decision back in December to kick out 35 diplomats and seal off two Russian

compounds in response to meddling in the elections.

Back then, Moscow decided not to respond, making a grand public play of its forbearance. After all, Trump was heading for the White House, and there were still hopes in Putin's team that his fulsome praise of Russia might be translated into some practical gains.

Since then, though, the Russians have learned the painful lesson that Trump promises more than he can deliver and have watched as a suspicious Congress, a hostile media and a rolling judicial investigation increasingly tie his

hands when it comes to working with Moscow.

With this new round of sanctions, Putin clearly felt he could not afford not to respond. For a leader who has built so much of his personal legitimacy on his image as the defender of Russian interests, the risk was that he would look weak.

But the fact that the best they could do was, in effect, to pull some old counter-sanctions out of the deep freeze, underlines the sharp disparity between Moscow and Washington's positions.

This latest move will certainly inconvenience both the US State

Department and also any Russian wanting a US visa or otherwise hoping to use the services of America's embassy and consulates there. It will be especially problematic for all those Russians employed by the US government who will find themselves unemployed.

But while Putin called these "biting" measures, that is something of an exaggeration. In the grand scheme of things, they will be pretty limited

in their impact. Diplomatic contacts will continue, visas will be processed -- albeit more slowly. Exchanges will still take place.

The truth of the matter is that while Putin had rather more "biting" options at his disposal, they would hurt him more that they would hurt the Americans. NASA, for example, still depends on Russian rockets to loft its astronauts to the International Space Station, and Moscow could have refused to do this any more --

but that would have cost Russia's cash-strapped space program almost a billion dollars in 2017 and 2018 alone.

Likewise, Russia exports nothing essential to America, and with a GDP smaller than that of New York state's, there is minimal scope for other economic moves.

So discount the instant "Putin gets tough" headlines.

Not only are the Russians still desperate not to burn their bridges with Trump -- tellingly, the counter-sanctions were announced after the US measures were passed on the Hill, but before the presidential signature, so they can be sold as a response to "Congress's sanctions" -- these are eye-catching but essentially empty measures.

As ever, Putin is trying to look tough, while being in an extremely weak position.



Bershidsky : U.S. Sanctions Are Another Gift to Putin

Russian President

Vladimir Putin tends to respond to Western sanctions in ways its authors probably didn't anticipate: by going after those Russians who could most help their own country and who want to build ties with the West. His order last week to U.S. diplomatic missions in Russia to cut their staff to 455 people -- the exact number of staff that Russia has in the U.S. -- is the latest example.

In 2012, when the U.S. Congress passed the Magnitsky Act, which authorized the government to impose travel bans and asset freezes on Russian officials involved in human rights violations, Russia responded by banning U.S. adoptions of Russian children. The asymmetrical response was preposterous to many Russians, and thousands protested in Moscow. Those children whom no Russians wanted to adopt -- usually those with severe disabilities -- were put up for foreign adoption, and it was mindlessly cruel to deprive them of a chance for a better life. But Russian state TV conducted a major campaign at the time alleging cruel treatment of Russian kids by U.S. adoptive families and stressing national pride. Polls at the time showed about half of Russians supporting the retaliatory bill while less than a third were opposed.

In 2014, in response to Ukraine-related sanctions imposed by the U.S. and Europe, Russia banned the import of a long list of foods from Europe. The effect on European food producers hasn't been major: It was largely offset by export increases to other markets and by

immediate European Union support measures for certain countries and sectors. But every time I have visitors from Moscow in Berlin, I watch them stock up on cheese to take home.

People who miss French cheese are a relatively Westernized minority. Most Russians loved another state TV campaign (complete with images of illegally imported food trampled by tractors) that told them the countersanctions were good for Russian agriculture. Two-thirds of Russians say the government was right to introduce the food embargo. Only 12 percent contend that it hurts Russians more than the West.

Now that the U.S. Congress has passed a new sanctions package, which codifies and tightens some previously existing restrictions, Putin wants U.S. diplomatic missions -- the embassy in Moscow and the consulates in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok -- to shed staff. There are only about 300 people in the missions who were hired in the U.S.; the rest, more than 900 of them, are local hires, most of them Russians who do technical work. The U.S. will likely choose to keep most of its diplomats (and spies) in place but get rid of the locals. This means the loss of several hundred Russian jobs. But, more to the point, the cuts will almost certainly hurt Russians' ability to travel to the U.S., as former ambassador Michael McFaul pointed out in a tweet.

Even today, a Russian applying for a visitor visa to the U.S. in Moscow must wait 46 days for an obligatory consular appointment. The wait times are considerably shorter in St.

Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok, but now they will likely converge toward the current Moscow norm, and in Moscow, people will have to wait long enough to make travel planning impossible.

If Putin wanted his retaliatory measures to be symmetrical, he would have taken into consideration that the Russian consular service in the U.S. issued about 86,000 visas in 2015, while the U.S. missions in Russia issued almost 183,000 visas in fiscal year 2016. But Putin doesn't care about the kind of Russians who want to travel to the U.S. He has repeatedly warned officials and law enforcement officers against going to Western countries where they could be targeted by intelligence services and where their assets could be seized under one set of sanctions or another. Those who still want to go are perceived almost as representatives of a pro-Western fifth column -- just like those hapless cheese-eaters and the minority that believes Russian orphans can have a better life in the U.S. than at home.

This pattern of Russian responses provides an important part of the answer to an often-asked question: Why is Russia preoccupied with Western sanctions despite their obvious inability to achieve stated goals?

It's impossible to know the counterfactual -- what Putin would have done were there no sanctions -- but the sanctions have not deterred him from propping up separatists in eastern Ukraine, holding on to Crimea or allowing cyber campaigns against Western countries to go ahead. Nor do they

really hurt his rich friends. There have been no high-profile seizures of their assets since Italy froze \$30 million worth of real estate owned by Putin's former judo partner Arkady Rotenberg -- a mosquito bite to the billionaire. Sanctions have also failed to inflict much pain on the Russian economy, which has greatly reduced its debt exposure to Western nations and is working to increase its technological self-sufficiency in key areas such as oil and gas.

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But just as the U.S. sanctions were primarily about playing to a domestic audience -- a way to respond to the Trump-Russia scandal -- the Kremlin's response is to use them for domestic fodder. They are held up as proof of "Russophobia" -- Russian officials' favorite term to describe what they see as the unfair treatment of Russia, a desire to curb it rather than cooperate with it. The Kremlin anger isn't a sign of real pain; it's strategic.

Being angry about sanctions strengthens Putin's domestic message about a country surrounded by enemies and undermined by unpatriotic Russians subverted by a hostile West. The anger is aimed largely at the domestic audience and meant to tell it that looking for friends, opportunities or just plain fun in the West is futile, perhaps even hostile to the Motherland.



Editorial Board

Editorial : Trump is still giving Putin the benefit of the doubt — and it's weakening U.S. policy on Russia

The Times

Vladimir Putin's decision to order a reduction in the U.S. diplomatic

presence in Russia is an admission of defeat in his efforts to reverse sanctions imposed by the Obama administration for Russia's meddling in last year's U.S. elections. "We waited for quite a long time" to respond, Putin said in a television

interview Sunday, in the hope "that, perhaps, something will change for the better."

But it's easy to see why Putin might have thought President Trump in the end would forgive Russian

interference in the race for the White House — which U.S. intelligence agencies described as "a significant escalation in directness, level of activity, and scope of effort compared to previous operations aimed at U.S. elections."

In December, when Putin didn't immediately retaliate for President Obama's expulsion of 35 Russian diplomats and his closing of two compounds allegedly used for espionage, then-President-elect Trump tweeted: "Great move on delay (by V. Putin) — I always knew he was very smart!"

The U.S. must proceed cautiously and with due regard for Russia's hostile behavior toward the U.S. and its allies.

After Trump took office, his administration floated the idea of easing sanctions. Last month, Trump aide Sebastian Gorka said the administration was considering

returning the compounds in Long Island, N.Y., and Queen Anne's County, Md., to Russia because "we want to give collaboration [and] cooperation a chance."

And even when Putin lost patience and retaliated, it wasn't because Trump changed his mind about Russian meddling. According to Anthony Scaramucci, the president's now-fired communications director, Trump recently said, "Maybe they did it, maybe they didn't do it."

What really happened is that veto-proof majorities in both houses of Congress gave Trump little choice but to endorse legislation codifying these sanctions and others

punishing Russia for its aggression in Ukraine and arms shipments to Syria. (The bill also imposes sanctions on North Korea and Iran.) Trump rationalized his decision to support the legislation by claiming, unconvincingly, that "critical elements" had been modified to meet his objections.

The problem with Trump's position isn't that he wants to maintain communications with Putin. Obviously, the United States must deal with Russia on a variety of issues, including North Korea, the war in Syria and negotiations on the two superpowers' nuclear arsenals. But the U.S. must proceed cautiously and with due regard for

Russia's hostile behavior toward the U.S. and its allies.

Vice President Mike Pence seems to recognize that. Speaking in Tallinn, Estonia, on Monday, Pence said that "the president and our Congress are unified in our message to Russia — a better relationship, and the lifting of sanctions, will require Russia to reverse the actions that caused the sanctions to be imposed in the first place."

That message would ring truer, though, if Trump would stop questioning whether Russia really was guilty as charged.



Gordis : Netanyahu Loses His Cool in a Summer of Crises

by Daniel Gordis
More stories by

Daniel Gordis

This summer has been a tumultuous one for Israel, and for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, with two-thirds of Israelis in a recent poll registering their dissatisfaction with his handling of the crisis at the Temple Mount. Long regarded as a master strategist, Netanyahu of late seems to be making bold moves that later back him into a corner.

The most recent example came this week in the case of Elor Azaria, the Israeli soldier convicted of manslaughter for having killed an already incapacitated terrorist in Hebron last year. Although Netanyahu has recently been much more careful about expressing his views regarding Azaria's appeal before a military court, few in Israel have forgotten that when news of the shooting first broke, Netanyahu was quick to show support for the soldier. When a military court convicted Azaria and sentenced him to a year and a half in prison, Netanyahu advocated that he be pardoned.

Azaria appealed his conviction. When the military appeals court on Sunday upheld the conviction and refused to reduce the sentence, many saw it as an implicit rebuke of the prime minister. Netanyahu continues to insist that he believes a pardon is in order. But Israel's left-leaning press applauded the verdict (arguing that it shows that the military has not lost its moral moorings) and berated the prime minister for joining "the mob that

sees judges as traitors." If Netanyahu had taken a more measured position at the outset, he could have urged a pardon now as an act of statesmanship. Given his earlier interventions, however, any such appearance was beyond reach.

The ruling followed two debilitating weeks for the prime minister. After the killing of the two Israeli policemen (with arms that had been smuggled onto the Temple Mount), Netanyahu ordered that metal detectors be placed near the Temple Mount. On the surface, metal detectors are a natural and noninvasive response to violence. But on the Temple Mount, matters are different. Ever since Israel captured the Temple Mount in the 1967 Six Day War, Israel has given religious control of the area to a Jordanian trust.

Netanyahu had now given Muslim authorities a pretext for claiming that Israel was changing the status quo on the mount, an accusation that can arouse the ire of millions of Muslims. Things quickly spun out of control. Muslims rioted and insisted that they would not return to the Temple Mount until Israel removed both the metal detectors and security cameras it had installed.

In support of the Jordanians, Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, canceled security arrangements with Israel for the first time since he took office in 2005. Much of the Arab world had been warming to Israel as an ally in combating Iran and Islamic State. Now, though, Netanyahu found

himself facing warning from the Arab League that Israel was "playing with fire" -- a crisis of the prime minister's own making.

Netanyahu, whose political capital comes first and foremost by portraying himself as "Mr. Security," knew that he could not back down without great political cost. Salvation came in the form of yet another crisis, when an Israeli security guard in Amman shot and killed two Jordanians after being attacked by one of them. The guard found refuge in the Israeli Embassy, which was quickly surrounded by an angry Jordanian mob demanding that the guard be executed. Jordan announced that the Israeli team would not be allowed to leave. Suddenly, Netanyahu's major task was extricating the entire Israeli diplomatic and security team without incident. Nothing trumps the safe return of Israelis home, so when Netanyahu agreed to remove the metal detectors as part of an agreement with Jordan that saw the Israelis returned to Israel, it seemed that the prime minister had narrowly escaped a political disaster.

Stunningly, though, he immediately created a new crisis, when he was filmed hugging the security guard upon his return to Jerusalem. Jordan's King Abdullah, who understood well that he had risked antagonizing his rabidly anti-Israel street by allowing the release, was enraged by the hero's welcome. He immediately announced that the Israeli ambassador would not be allowed to return to Jordan until Israel tried the guard, who had shot both his assailant and an innocent

bystander, an orthopedic surgeon who owned the apartment the guard had rented. Once again, Netanyahu was in a bind. Israel announced it would investigate the guard, and with the king watching, that probe is not likely to be pro forma. Yet the investigation, which will raise many of the same sentiments as the Azaria trial, will take place because of the king's insistence -- a sign of weakness for both Israel and its prime minister.

It was lost on no one that the entire episode might have been avoided had the prime minister showed some restraint. Haaretz suggested that Netanyahu's judgement was clouded by his involvement in a series of corruption investigations.

Polls indicate that 77 percent of Israelis believe that "Mr. Security" caved on removing the Temple Mount metal detectors. Coupled with recent rumors that casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, who singlehandedly funds the unabashedly pro-Netanyahu newspaper Israel Today, has tired of Netanyahu, the summer of 2017 has left the prime minister badly bloodied.

Netanyahu, though, is hardly the only diminished presence. Israeli security suspects that Abbas may be ailing, and U.S.'s undefined policy in the region has all the players guessing, and nervous. That is hardly the recipe for regional stability, and Israelis are keenly aware that the summer, often the season of renewed violence, is ominously far from over.



Lewis : Scuttling the Iran Deal will Lead to Another North Korea

If you like North Korea's nuclear-armed ICBM, you are going to love America walking

away from the nuclear deal with Iran.

On this week's episode of the *Federal Apprentice*, the staff forced Donald Trump to certify that Iran is

complying with the terms of the nuclear deal brokered by his predecessor. None too happy with that outcome, Trump is reportedly exploring ways to collapse it. That's

a terrible idea. Two rocket tests launched last week in a single 24-hour span by Iran and North Korea help explain why. They offer a useful opportunity to compare two very

different possibilities: what Iran looks like today, with the nuclear deal in place, and how things have turned out with North Korea following the collapse of efforts to negotiate limits on Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs.

Last week, Iran launched a rocket called the "Simorgh" as part of a program to place satellites in orbit. The Simorgh itself is not an intercontinental ballistic missile, or ICBM, but the technologies are broadly similar.

Space launches do not, however, violate the terms of the nuclear deal, contrary to the claims of some of the deal's opponents. The text of the deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is silent on the subject missile launches. Accordingly, U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, which implemented the deal, toned down the tough language in previous resolutions. Iran is merely "called upon" — the diplomatic equivalent of a suggestion — to refrain from activities related to "ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons." (And the term "designed to be capable" is so ambiguous as to be almost meaningless.) Indeed, the fact that the deal contained no limits on Iran's missile program was something opponents highlighted and supporters, like me, lamented.

These details, though, don't matter. The Trump administration is already signaling that it intends to sabotage the nuclear deal by insisting on inspections in a transparent and cynical effort to push Iran out of the agreement. The JCPOA already provides for inspections, but Team Trump seems to be envisioning the equivalent of a safeguards colonoscopy, not to catch Iran cheating but to make life under the agreement a constant source of friction. Whether or not a space launch is legally permitted or prohibited, Team Trump is likely to decide that it is one more calumny

to launch against what Trump modestly called the "worst deal ever."

But a casual glance at North Korea helps illustrate why that is shortsighted.

According to Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, the Trump administration won't be talking about North Korea's missile launch. After all, what's to talk about? North Korea's recent tests of an ICBM clearly violate various U.N. Security Council resolutions, and the United States isn't going to do anything about it. North Korea's Hwasong-14 ICBM flew more than 3,700 kilometers in altitude, before landing in the Sea of Japan. Had North Korea fired the Hwasong-14 on a normal trajectory, it would have traveled far enough to hit most major U.S. cities including New York and Los Angeles. The people who are promising you a better deal with Iran have exactly no plan to deal with North Korea.

It's the equivalent of repeal and replace, except that stripping 20 million people of health care looks like a walk in the park compared with blundering into nuclear war.

It's the equivalent of repeal and replace, except that stripping 20 million people of health care looks like a walk in the park compared with blundering into nuclear war.

During the 1990s, a lot of U.S. officials objected to any diplomatic agreement with North Korea that would allow it to use its own rockets to launch satellites into space, arguing that the country would learn too much about ICBMs in the process. The Barack Obama administration walked away from a deal with North Korea in April 2012 because Pyongyang insisted it be able to conduct a space launch to celebrate Kim Il Sung's birthday.

The shortsightedness of those decisions should now be obvious. North Korea has tested an ICBM

that can deliver a nuclear weapon throughout the United States. Did it convert its Unha space launcher, which the United States calls the Taepodong-2, into an ICBM? No, it did not. It built something far more frightening.

North Korea's ICBM, known as the Hwasong-14, looks nothing like the Taepodong-2 or Iran's Simorgh. The latter missiles are very large because their first stage uses the inefficient propellant types found in Scud missiles. It takes North Korea and Iran a long time to assemble these missiles using cranes and then to fuel them. The Simorgh was reportedly visible on the launch pad for an entire day. While this technology might be useful for an ICBM in a pinch, in a war the United States isn't going to give either Iran or North Korea a day to assemble a nuclear-armed missile.

That is precisely why North Korea developed the Hwasong-14, which has a better first-stage engine, more advanced propellants, and a lightweight airframe. These innovations mean that the missile is small enough to be transported by a big truck that can drive to a remote location and then ready the missile to launch, probably in under an hour. That makes the Hwasong-14 extraordinarily difficult for the United States to track. For the most recent test, North Korea seems to have fired the missile from a surprise location deep inside the country to drive that point home. If you had to choose between North Korea armed with jerry-built space launchers as ICBMs and North Korea armed with the Hwasong-14, you would always take your chances with the space launchers.

There are, of course, links between space launch programs and ballistic missiles. At CNS, my research institute, we suspect that the second stage of North Korea's Hwasong-14 missile is similar to the upper stages designed for the Iranian space launch vehicles. And while that does

mean that Iran's space programs could help advance an ICBM program, it also suggests something else — that the flow of technology has reversed. We are now seeing innovations in Iran that later appear in North Korea. Iran could build an ICBM just as well as North Korea, if not better, whenever it wants.

So what's stopping Tehran? It's not that Iran can't build an ICBM; it's that Iran is choosing not to. And that is probably because, unlike short- or medium-range ballistic missiles, it is hard to imagine an ICBM with any purpose other than delivering a nuclear weapon. That would throw the Iran nuclear deal into chaos and trigger a confrontation that, for the moment, Tehran seems to want to avoid. In other words, the deal is working.

If we want it to keep working, we have to learn to live with Iran's aspirations for spaceflight, just as we have learned to live with its nuclear energy program in exchange for limits that help prevent Iran from building a bomb. In both cases, the sticks of sanctions and military attack have to come with carrots — incentives like accepting the peaceful use of dangerous technologies. That includes a fair amount of research that might well be used for nefarious purposes. In life, there are some risks that you simply cannot eliminate.

And there is this: Idle hands are the devil's playthings. If we really want to discourage Tehran from building an ICBM, we need to keep Iran's missileers busy doing something else. If Iran's missile scientists are content with sending satellites into space, that's fine by me. We can sanction them when they sell their services to North Korea, but if they stop, we need to be prepared to welcome them into the community of space-faring states.

Perhaps that's not the best outcome, but it could be worse. Look at North Korea.



Tobey : Tearing Up the Nuke Deal Now Would Hand Iran the Best of All Possible Worlds

The Iran nuclear deal is deeply flawed. Its duration is too short, and it fails to require of Tehran the universally agreed-upon minimum for effective verification — a complete and correct declaration of all relevant activities. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake for President Donald Trump to renounce it now, as he is reportedly contemplating.

First, the deal's short duration is problematic. President Barack Obama himself warned, "[A] ... relevant fear would be that in year 13, 14, 15, [Iran has] advanced

centrifuges that enrich uranium fairly rapidly, and at that point, the breakout times would have shrunk almost down to zero." Tearing up the deal now would only compound this problem. Trump should be seeking a longer deal, not a shorter one.

Worse, with the unfreezing of hundreds of billions of dollars in assets and approval of like amounts of investments and commercial transactions, Iran has already gained enormous benefits from the agreement, while the other parties

have not. In real estate terms, walking away now would be like putting down a two-month deposit and six months of prepaid rent, and then abandoning an apartment after a few weeks.

Iran's benefits from the deal were immediate and permanent, whereas those that may accrue to the other parties are deferred and temporary.

Iran's benefits from the deal were immediate and permanent, whereas those that may accrue to the other parties are deferred and temporary.

Second, if the United States destroyed the Iran nuclear deal, it would be impossible to reassemble the international coalition necessary to impose effective sanctions. China and Russia would certainly press ahead with the commercial deals they have been busy signing. Their willingness to do business with Tehran alone, not to mention the vetoes they wield in the U.N. Security Council, would be enough to undermine fatally any attempt to re-impose sanctions. Thus, tearing up the deal now would give Iran the best of all worlds: freedom from

sanctions and unlimited enrichment efforts.

Third, Britain, France, and Germany vigorously oppose ending the deal they helped to negotiate, and therefore doing so would deepen the fissures that already threaten North Atlantic alliances. Russian President Vladimir Putin's primary strategic objective is to fracture NATO, and tearing up the Iran deal would hand Moscow an important victory in that campaign.

Lingering frustration over the Iran deal is understandable. It was badly oversold. While Obama said, "Every pathway to a nuclear weapon is cut

off," he knew that restrictions on enrichment capacity would fade away eight to 13 years from now. The administration promised anytime-anywhere inspections, but did not deliver. The deal was also rammed through Congress under jury-rigged procedures, despite opposition by a bipartisan majority of both houses. Moreover, Iran is almost daily salting these wounds with missile tests, aggressive regional policies, and continuing support for terrorism.

Frustration about the deal, however, would be best directed toward three positive actions.

First, the accord must be enforced rigorously, but has not been.

Second, the United States will need to map out and build a consensus for actions that will be necessary to deter Tehran from fulfilling its plans to deploy *almost twenty times* the enrichment capacity at which it was operating when the agreement was finalized. This will require a sophisticated, multiyear diplomatic campaign.

Third, Iran's long-range missile program, which — given its inaccuracy — only makes sense when paired with nuclear weapons, must be curbed. Those are

objectives that our allies can endorse and ones that we will need their help to achieve.

Absent those actions, Trump's successor will face an Iran only days from the ability to produce enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon, unfettered by international sanctions and fortified by renewed oil revenues. Tearing up the deal now would only hasten that perilous day.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

China Hits Out at U.S. Over North Korea

Farnaz Fassihi

UNITED NATIONS—China lashed out at the U.S. on Monday over North Korea, saying Washington was ratcheting up tensions with Pyongyang and violating Security Council resolutions calling for restraint and dialogue.

China's ambassador to the U.N., Liu Jieyi, criticized the U.S. for its plan to impose unilateral sanctions that don't have the Council's backing and for publicly saying that Washington was keeping all options on the table. Joint U.S. and South Korean military exercises in the Korean Peninsula, he added, risked destabilizing the region.

"These developments run counter to the obligations in the Security Council resolutions," Mr. Liu said at a press conference to mark the end of China's monthlong presidency of the Council.

North Korea fired two intercontinental ballistic missiles in July, with the most recent one on

Friday appearing capable of reaching the continental U.S. China and Russia have so far not agreed with the U.S. and its European allies, who are demanding a new resolution imposing tougher economic sanctions on Pyongyang.

Mr. Liu's comments appeared to be a response to a series of comments and tweets over the weekend by President Donald Trump and U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley that accused China of failing to rein in North Korea.

China wields significant economic and political influence over North Korea. The country's business dealings with North Korea account for 90% of the reclusive nation's trade with the outside world.

Mr. Trump tweeted on Saturday that, "they [China] do NOTHING for us with North Korea, just talk. We will no longer allow this to continue. China could easily solve this problem!"

Ms. Haley later Sunday issued a statement saying, "China must

decide whether it is finally willing to take this vital step. The time for talk is over."

Ms. Haley said the U.S. had no plans to call for a Council emergency meeting, as has been customary after previous North Korean violations, because there was no point if the meetings don't produce results.

China's U.N. ambassador instead reversed the blame. Mr. Liu said it was the U.S. and North Korea that had the primary responsibility to resolve this crisis by "moving in the right direction, not China."

"No matter how capable China is, China's efforts will not yield practical results because it depends on the two principal parties," he said.

The U.S. mission to the U.N. didn't respond to questions regarding Mr. Liu's comments.

The Security Council has been steadily moving toward an impasse regarding North Korea. Earlier in July, the Council failed to issue a statement condemning North

Korea's first test of an intercontinental ballistic missile. Russia questioned U.S. claims that the missile was long-ranged and said its own data showed that it was a medium-range missile.

For the past month, the U.S. and China have been negotiating a draft resolution to impose sanctions on North Korea that would target oil sales, increase air and maritime monitoring and sanction senior regime officials.

Diplomats said that the open war of words between U.S. and China over the past few days was unusual given that the two countries have been negotiating behind closed doors for a consensus.

Japan, a Council member that partners with the U.S. in calling meetings over North Korea, said that it was weighing its options but that it was important for the U.S., Japan and South Korea "to move forward together."

The New York Times

Editorial : Drop the Bluster on North Korea

The Editorial Board

As President Trump has implicitly conceded, his approach to the North Korean nuclear threat is failing. It was all about putting the responsibility on China to force the North to abandon its program, which has grown increasingly and alarmingly formidable and now includes as many as 21 nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them. "I am very disappointed in China," he tweeted over the weekend.

Mr. Trump was driven to play the blame game after North Korea on Friday tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that, for the first

time, appeared capable of reaching the West Coast of the United States. It marked the second ICBM launch in 24 days and the kind of technical achievement that American presidents said the United States could not tolerate. Mr. Trump, in fact, had insisted in early January that such a missile "won't happen."

Well, it did happen — twice. And while experts question how soon a reliable nuclear weapon can be fired on a missile, it is wise to assume that North Korea's program will continue to advance, putting the United States and its allies South Korea and Japan at greater risk, unless a way is found to break the present cycle of threats and testing.

That cycle persisted over the weekend. On Sunday, in a show of force, the United States flew two B-1 bombers over the Korean Peninsula and conducted a successful missile defense test over the Pacific Ocean. Meanwhile, South Korea said it would soon ask the Trump administration to allow it to build more powerful ballistic missiles that could strike deep into the North.

There is no underestimating the difficult spot in which Mr. Trump finds himself. President Bill Clinton and the North Koreans negotiated what amounted to an eight-year truce under which the North agreed to freeze its plutonium program. The George W. Bush administration

didn't like the agreement, which later fell apart. President Barack Obama tried new negotiations, failed and then gave up. North Korea and its nuclear program, long a complex challenge with no surefire solution, thus is becoming exponentially worse.

There is no getting away from the fact that China can and should do more to pressure the North to curb its nuclear program. The Chinese don't want Pyongyang to have nuclear weapons. But their greater fear is that North Korea's government could collapse, sending millions of refugees fleeing across the border and effectively handing power over the peninsula to South

Korea, which in turn means putting an American ally on China's border.

The Trump administration, backed by Congress, has not given up on the idea that China can be forced to help, and is preparing to increase the pressure on Beijing by sanctioning Chinese banks doing business with North Korea. But sanctions alone are not the answer. Mr. Trump needs to face the reality that he cannot solve this crisis by proxy, that he must intervene directly and that he should do so soon. Tensions, already high, could increase this month when American and South Korean forces hold their

annual military exercises, which the North Koreans take as a sign that the allies want to overthrow their government.

What would such direct intervention entail? For starters, Mr. Trump should drop the bluster and dispatch Secretary of State Rex Tillerson or some other high-level envoy to Pyongyang to explore whether there is any basis for negotiations. In May, the president raised the possibility of meeting the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, himself "under the right circumstances" to defuse tensions.

Even a Tillerson visit would be a major diplomatic undertaking. China, Russia and some American nuclear experts have advocated a proposal under which North Korea would freeze its nuclear and missile testing in return for the United States and South Korea limiting their military exercises. It is not at all clear that Mr. Trump's chaotic White House and weakened State Department are in any position to take these ideas and turn them into a coherent negotiating strategy.

The administration has said North Korea must send a "tangible signal" that it will abandon its nuclear

program before talks even begin. This is not a realistic basis for negotiation. The North's program is advanced and its leadership deeply distrustful. Talks should begin without preconditions; what's most urgent is to halt the program's progress.

Are the North Koreans even interested in talks? American experts who study the issue say there have been repeated signals in recent weeks that they are. That can't be known, however, unless someone goes and asks them.



Cristol : Trump's reaction to North Korea cannot be nuclear (opinion)

Jonathan Cristol

(CNN) Last Friday, North Korea conducted a successful test of an intercontinental ballistic missile that appears capable of reaching American cities, including Seattle, Los Angeles and Chicago. This new development is a cause for concern, but not panic or rash aggressive action.

The greater danger faced by both the US and the region is the reaction of President Donald Trump to this development.

The existence of a nuclear power with the capability of striking the United States is an inherent threat, but it is one that the US has lived with for decades. In 1986, there were over 40,000 Soviet nuclear warheads pointed at the US.

Today, there are over 1,700 Russian warheads

capable of killing tens of millions of Americans in under 20 minutes.

And yet, somehow, most Americans are able to sleep at night -- and are more afraid of Iran than Russia.

The US military has acted appropriately and prudently since this recent test. It has conducted another successful test of THAAD,

and held bomber runs over the Korean Peninsula with the South Koreans.

Trump's personal response has been to tweet -- angrily: "China could easily solve this problem." This, despite the President previously tweeting that, "While I greatly appreciate the efforts of President Xi & China to help with North Korea, it has not worked out. At least I know China tried."

Apparently, the buck stops in Beijing, which, incidentally has its own nuclear armed missiles that are capable of destroying American cities.

Trump seems to think that China can stop North Korea and that it should do so simply because he wants it to. But China and the US have divergent regional interests. China needs to make sure that North Korea does not provoke a major increase in the US presence in the region. But it also fears a collapse of the Kim government, which would result in a regional refugee crisis and potentially bring US forces up to the Chinese border.

China certainly could do more, but the US (and each of us) should know from experience that getting friends -- let alone frenemies -- to do what you want them to do is hard.

Much of the hyperbolic reaction to the North Korean missile tests is rooted in lack of understanding of how missile tests progress.

States do not continually test weapons systems and then, as soon as they are successful, use them against enemy targets. Pyongyang's missile testing program will no more end with a nuclear strike on Washington than did its nuclear program end with a bomb dropped on Seoul.

The only time in history that that has happened is the bombing of Hiroshima, which came in the context of an all-out war between the US and Japan.

Kim Jong Un is a rational actor who wants to survive. The ability to strike the continental US ensures that survival; actually striking the United States ensures his destruction.

It is Trump's response to these incremental developments that presents the real risk.

He could determine that US involvement in the region is not worth the risk to the US mainland and withdraw the US from our regional defense treaties and US forces from the region.

Indeed, this may be the real goal of Kim Jong Un and South Korea may

already be nervous about this possibility. Seoul recently requested that the US allow it to double the explosive yield of its own missiles, and

McClatchy reported that South Korea

may seek to develop its own nuclear deterrent, though President Moon Jae-in currently opposes a nuclear program.

Another possibility is that Trump decides to mount a preventive strike against North Korea.

There was a time when a preventive strike on North Korea was an option worthy of serious debate, but that time passed years ago. An attack on North Korea now would both present an unacceptable risk to South Korea and Japan, and would involve the US in a war that would make Iraq and Afghanistan look like minor fender benders.

The situation on the Korean Peninsula is complicated, and the stakes are high. It can't be solved by the shared consumption of a piece of chocolate cake, no matter how beautiful it might be.



How the U.S. Can Target North Korea

Krishnadev

Calamur

The Trump administration's public response to North Korea's latest ICBM test has been to criticize China for not doing enough to pressure its client in Pyongyang.

President Trump said China was doing "nothing" on North Korea while "our foolish past leaders have allowed them to make hundreds of

billions of dollars a year in trade." (Xinhua, the state-run Chinese news agency, rejected that linkage in a commentary Monday.) Nikki Haley, the U.S. envoy to the UN, said China "must decide whether it is finally willing to" enforce existing resolutions against North Korea. Vice President Mike Pence called on "China to use its 'influence ... to encourage North Korea to join the family of nations." But China's willingness to act against North Korea may be limited.

"I don't believe that the West overestimates the influence China could have. I think we do overestimate the degree to which China will use its influence," Abraham Denmark, the Obama-era deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, told me.

Denmark pointed out that North Korea gets much of its foreign capital through trade with China, which has in the past used that trade as leverage against

Pyongyang. But China hasn't used that leverage to the fullest extent because, Denmark said, it fears a collapse in North Korea.

"They've been very clear that they are willing to inflict some economic pain on North Korea, but not to the degree that it would threaten the stability of the regime," he said. "And that is why China continues to pump the brakes on international sanctions."

North Korea is subject to a range of international sanctions that prohibit the sale of military equipment and luxury goods, that target its financial system, and that ban the trade of certain commodities that provide a valuable financial lifeline to the North. But those international sanctions have been limited in their impact and there's little indication they have either curbed North Korea's missile and nuclear programs or blocked its access to the international financial system. U.S.-specific sanctions against Pyongyang, imposed last year, target entities that cooperate with North Korea on, among other things, its weapons programs and trade in commodities. It also sanctions North Korean officials over the country's human-rights record. The U.S. also designated North Korea a primary money-laundering concern—a move that should prompt stricter sanctions.

Critics of the U.S. policy toward the North argue the Trump administration could do much more to target Pyongyang not only by sanctioning its officials and entities, but also those from its allies that enable the North's continued survival.

Bruce Klingner, a senior research fellow for

Northeast Asia at the Heritage Foundation who worked for two decades at the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency, told me the U.S. could use targeted financial steps to unilaterally target North Korea. He said the vast majority of all financial transactions in the world, including North Korea's, go through U.S. banks that are regulated by the Treasury Department.

"That actually gives us tremendous leverage to seize and freeze assets, to impose fines, and to identify entities as money-laundering concerns, which means that they cannot access the U.S. financial system, which is the kiss of death for a financial institution," Klingner said. "And it also makes them an international pariah that no one else will want to deal with."

Klingner pointed out that the U.S. has fined European banks \$12 billion for laundering money for Iran, but has not fined Chinese financial institutions for laundering money for North Korea—for which he blamed the Obama administration.

"If you talk to people who work sanctions in the U.S. government, they'll say they've had evidence for years against North Korean and Chinese violators of U.S. law, but

they were prevented from implementing it by senior officials," Klingner said, adding the U.S. must defend and enforce its laws.

He compared the situation with China and North Korea to a bank president witnessing "someone physically entering his bank with suitcases of cash and knowing it's for illicit activities."

"The bank president is not only allowed to defend his bank, he's obligated to do so, otherwise he's in violation of U.S. law," Klingner said. "Similarly, Chinese, and North Korean, and other entities have been digitally entering U.S. banks and committing money laundering. If we don't enforce our laws, we're giving de facto immunity from U.S. laws simply because they are Chinese."

Denmark pointed out that the Obama administration put in place some of the strongest international sanctions against North Korea—following congressional passage of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016—but added "much more can be done—especially unilaterally."

This, he said, could take the form of secondary sanctions, which would target entities and individuals in third

countries that do business with North Korea. China, North Korea's largest trading partner, would be heavily affected if the U.S. takes this route. Indeed, the Trump administration has already begun taking this approach. Last month, it targeted two Chinese citizens, a Chinese shipping company, and a Chinese bank for their ties to North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Still, it's not clear whether any amount of diplomatic pressure can get North Korea to change its behavior. Kim Jong Un has shown that he won't abandon his nuclear or missile programs even in the face of intense international pressure—no matter what the cost. Indeed, Klingner said that North Korean officials told him last month that "denuclearization is totally off the table."

Trump, speaking at a Cabinet meeting Monday, sounded confident that the U.S. could resolve the issue.

"We'll handle North Korea. We'll be able to handle North Korea," he said. "It will be handled. We handle everything."

The New York Times Venezuela's Opposition, Battling Nicolás Maduro, Suffers a Crippling Blow

Nicholas Casey

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — Just a year and a half ago, Venezuela's opposition was riding high, at the apex of its power.

It had taken control of the National Assembly after years of having been outflanked by Venezuela's left. It was planning new laws, the release of its political prisoners and overhauls intended to pull Venezuela out of a deep economic crisis. Its eye was on the presidency in 2018.

But with one contentious vote on Sunday, President Nicolás Maduro effectively liquidated any political challenge that the opposition might present for him for years to come. Around midnight, officials certified the creation of a new political body, known as the constituent assembly, with the power to rewrite the Constitution to favor Mr. Maduro and empowered in the meantime to dismiss any branch of government viewed as disloyal.

Early Tuesday, family members of two prominent opposition figures, Leopoldo López and Antonio Ledezma, said on Twitter that the men had been taken from their

homes by security forces. Both men had been under house arrest.

It was a dramatic crash for the country's opposition in its long quest to regain control of Venezuela after a tide of popular discontent brought Hugo Chávez to the presidency in 1999. Not since the politicians joined the military to back a failed coup in 2002 — which spurred Mr. Chávez to purge his opponents — have members of Venezuela's opposition been laid so low.

"They played all their cards, and they played them effectively," said Christopher Sabatini, a foreign policy expert at the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, citing the opposition's attempts to parry Mr. Maduro this year. "But now all of their channels for representation and means for mediation have essentially evaporated."

Mr. Maduro's decision to sweep aside his rivals leaves them at a difficult crossroads, analysts said. Having finally succeeded at the ballot box after years of trying, the opposition finds itself having to contain popular anger on the streets, with some Venezuelans now

insisting that violence is the best way to confront the president.

More than 120 people have already died in months of protests, with Sunday being the most deadly day of all.

As the dust settled on Monday and the crowds went home, opposition lawmakers were urging calm. They said they would not fight back even if the new constituent assembly were to force them from their chamber, as many radical leftists are now urging the assembly to do.

"If they come with arms to take control of the national legislative palace, we can find another place to hold our sessions," Henry Ramos Allup, a prominent opposition lawmaker who until recently served as head of the National Assembly, told reporters.

Pressure was mounting on Mr. Maduro as well. On Monday afternoon, the United States Treasury Department added him to a growing list of Venezuelan officials facing sanctions, freezing any American assets the president owns and forbidding Americans to do business with him.

But while the White House had encouraged the Venezuelan opposition in recent days, the sanctions were far less severe than the crippling economic penalties it had threatened against Mr. Maduro before the vote on Sunday. Mr. Maduro is now one of only four heads of state to be sanctioned this way, including Bashar al-Assad of Syria, Kim Jong-un of North Korea and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

"Yesterday's illegitimate elections confirm that Maduro is a dictator who disregards the will of the Venezuelan people," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement.

The limited American response left many of Mr. Maduro's rivals pondering their future under the constituent assembly.

Supporters of the Venezuelan government waiting in line in Caracas on Sunday to vote for candidates for the new constituent assembly. Meridith Kohut for The New York Times

Among them was Luisa Ortega, the country's leftist attorney general who turned against Mr. Maduro this year, calling his protests repressive and the constitutional vote illegal. On

Sunday night, Mr. Maduro led chants against Ms. Ortega from a stage, saying the constituent assembly would soon remove her from office.

Ms. Ortega remained defiant. "It's a joke to the people and their sovereignty," she said of the vote. "Now we will see absolute power in the hands of a minority."

Marco Bozo, a legislator from Primero Justicia, an opposition party, appeared to have accepted that the National Assembly would be replaced in the coming days and that the opposition's options were limited.

"We have been resisting the government," he said on Monday. "We will continue organizing protests in the streets."

Yet street protests are becoming their own wild card, with calls for new elections having converged with concerns about hunger and a

lack of medicine to fuel widening unrest. While opposition politicians now lead the protest movement, many fear that if they are weakened, more radical elements may take charge.

Venezuelans may have gotten a glimpse of this on June 27, when a rogue police officer commandeered a helicopter and flew it around Caracas, firing at government buildings.

While no one was injured in the attack, the pilot, Oscar Pérez, has since emerged as a kind of folk hero among many who oppose Mr. Maduro. He releases videos with rebellious messages, and he appeared at an opposition rally in July to an adoring crowd.

Riordan Roett, the director of the Latin American Studies program at Johns Hopkins University, said such actions played into the hands of Mr. Maduro, who has repeatedly called his rivals "terrorists" and has

indicated that he would prefer to crush radicals with his security forces rather than negotiate with opposition politicians through mediators.

"The Chavistas will try to emasculate the democratic opposition, and they will have more draconian measures for the radical opposition," he said.

Yet there are signs that Mr. Maduro's moves may be radicalizing moderates within the opposition and that many voters may follow their lead.

On July 16, two weeks before Sunday's vote, the opposition parties held a protest referendum, in which voters overwhelmingly rebuked Mr. Maduro and opposed his constituent assembly. Among the three questions in that vote was a vaguely worded one asking whether Venezuela's military should "defend" the current Constitution and "back the decisions" of the

National Assembly, which some interpreted as taking the temperature for support for military intervention.

"That kind of question is reminiscent of Pinochet and 1973," Mr. Sabatini said, referring to the violence and unrest that took place after a military coup toppled an elected Chilean government and installed a dictatorship.

For their part, opposition lawmakers are getting ready for their new role as a protest movement, once they are stripped of any legislative powers.

"We are now acting through marches," said Milagro Valero, an opposition lawmaker from the city of Mérida.

But because the government began to ban street protests during the election, it is unclear whether that option will remain for Mr. Maduro's opponents.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Ian Talley in Washington and Juan Forero and Anatoly Kurmanav in Caracas

U.S. Freezes Assets of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro

The U.S. imposed sanctions against Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on Monday, saying his government abused human rights and organized an illegitimate vote designed to advance an authoritarian regime, as the leader threatened his domestic opponents with imprisonment.

The U.S. Treasury Department's move freezes any assets Mr. Maduro has within American jurisdiction, putting him in a small club of leaders it targets including North Korea's Kim Jong Un, Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and Syria's Bashar al-Assad.

It was unclear if Mr. Maduro had any U.S.-linked assets but the designation bans his access to the U.S. financial and commercial markets and prohibits any American entity from conducting business with him.

Caracas said 8.1 million people voted on Sunday to choose delegates to form an assembly to write a new national charter. The results drew scorn from many Venezuelans and condemnation from governments in Europe and the Americas who say the assembly will give the government unchecked authority.

The results were a foregone conclusion, since voters had been asked to choose 545 delegates from

6,000 candidates handpicked by the ruling party. Critics of the vote said it also was plagued by a lack of independent observers and safeguards to prevent people from casting multiple ballots.

"Yesterday's illegitimate elections confirm that Maduro is a dictator who disregards the will of the Venezuelan people," U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said, adding that Caracas used violence, repression and corruption to cow his opponents. The Treasury warned that any officials connected with the constituent assembly created in Sunday's vote also risk U.S. sanctions.

The Treasury didn't impose oil-related sanctions even though senior U.S. officials had warned they were considering a ban of the petroleum trade with Venezuela if Mr. Maduro moved ahead with the constituent assembly.

National Security Adviser Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster signaled at a White House press conference that the U.S. administration showed restraint out of concern some U.S. penalties could hurt ordinary Venezuelans. Mr. Trump is "only considering those options that would benefit directly the Venezuelan people," Mr. McMaster said.

Last week, the U.S. leveled sanctions on 13 high-ranking Venezuelan officials for alleged corruption, human-rights violations and undermining the country's democracy, warning that any individuals who became members of the constituent assembly risked

being added to the U.S. sanctions list.

Analysts and people familiar with the matter say the latest sanctions are part of a broader set of escalating actions that politically isolate the Maduro government and complicate any of its efforts to raise fresh funds or sign new deals through state-owned entities.

"It shows the seriousness of the administration's concerns and sends a message that the constituent assembly is not going to be accepted," said Mark Schneider, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and former top State Department official.

Mr. Maduro, a 54-year-old former bus driver and union leader, was handpicked by his mentor, the late strongman Hugo Chávez. A former lawmaker who helped rewrite the constitution in 1999 under Mr. Chávez, Mr. Maduro served several years as Venezuela's foreign minister and vice president.

Since taking office in 2013, Mr. Maduro has presided over a nation in disarray. The country's economic meltdown intensified due to years of mismanagement and a sharp drop in oil prices, the country's sole source of hard currency. Soaring inflation and severe shortages of food and medicine have led to widespread turmoil and an exodus of Venezuelans from the country. On Monday, he threatened to imprison his adversaries with imprisonment.

"Some will end up in a jail cell," Mr. Maduro said. "We are going to write a new history."

Mr. Maduro also said he would look to force the opposition to sit down for negotiations through a so-called truth commission that he previously said would be created by the new constituent assembly. Though he made his comments in a threatening manner, Stalin González, an opposition member of congress, said that the two sides needed to embark on real negotiations.

"An accord has to be the way out," he said. "Today we have to bet on an accord being a possibility."

Rhetoric on both sides portended heightened instability in a nation racked by protests. Ten more people died in confrontations between protesters and security forces on Sunday.

Still, the government deemed the vote a resounding success that would allow it to calm unrest and improve the economy. Mr. Maduro has done little, though, to clarify how the government would make corrections, since economists say state controls of the economy, including stringent price controls, are to blame.

"Now is the time to keep fighting in Venezuela for peace, for free elections," Julio Borges, head of the opposition-led National Assembly, said in a television interview on Monday. "Maduro is behaving like an emperor."

While many in the opposition despaired at what they said was an

increasingly autocratic tint to the Maduro administration, others worried that a government saddled with a collapsing economy and low popularity risks collapse.

Francisco Rodríguez, who has

strong links with government and opposition officials here and is the chief economist at New York-based brokerage Torino, said that as support for the administration declines, it may not be able to maintain its hold power "even with

the institutions of an authoritarian state."

"In other words," he said in a note to client, "even non-democratic governments require some level of political support for their grasp on

power to be stable, and it is unclear whether the government's current numbers are still above that threshold."

**The
Washington
Post**

UNE - Venezuela's Maduro is taking the country into uncharted waters. What does the opposition do next?

CARACAS, Venezuela — The Trump administration on Monday imposed sanctions on President Nicolás Maduro, after an election that critics called a tipping point toward dictatorship. But even with international pressure building and Venezuela's economy collapsing, beleaguered opposition activists here were facing a stark new challenge.

How could they confront a socialist machine that now controls all branches of government?

Citing Maduro's "outrageous seizure of absolute power," the U.S. government froze any American assets he may have and banned Americans from doing business with him. The move came after Maduro heralded the Sunday vote creating a new super-congress made up entirely of government backers. The newly cast legislators included his wife and son. The body will have sweeping powers to rewrite the constitution and redraw Venezuela's governing system.

"Maduro is not just a bad leader," said President Trump's national security adviser, H.R. McMaster. "He is now a dictator."

Despite the tough talk from the White House, the sanctions fell short of the crippling pressure many observers were expecting. Maduro swiftly dismissed the measures, saying on television that they were imposed because he didn't obey the "North American empire." He added: "Impose all the sanctions that you want, but I'm a free president."

Potentially more-sweeping measures — including the targeting of Venezuela's all-important oil industry — are still on the table. But the opposition here is running out of time to turn the tide, and is now facing new and significant threats.

The election was boycotted by the opposition, and many Venezuelans mocked the government's contention that more than 40 percent of voters took part. Under Maduro's mentor, the late leftist leader Hugo Chávez, many Venezuelans thought national election results were generally credible, although candidates complained that he used state resources to gain an edge. But

opposition activists called Sunday's vote a turning point, claiming that only about 12 percent of Venezuelans turned out, in what they called a historic rejection of Maduro and his plans.

Luisa Ortega Díaz, Venezuela's attorney general, who broke with the government in March, on Monday declared the vote fraudulent. She suggested that Maduro and his inner circle, including a vice president accused by the U.S. government of narco-trafficking, would now seek to use the new assembly to monopolize money and power.

"How will we control the public budget now? How will we know how much and in what things money is being invested? How amazing for them!" she said.

"This is not the project Hugo Chávez wanted for the country," she continued. "Far from it."

Maduro has said he proposed the assembly to bring peace to the streets after four months of often-violent demonstrations protesting the dire state of the economy and growing authoritarianism. Opponents said he skewed the system for choosing candidates to ensure control of the new body.

On Thursday, those chosen for the new Constituent Assembly are set to replace the democratically elected members of the nation's legislature, which is dominated by the opposition. Some opposition lawmakers defiantly went to the National Assembly building on Monday, vowing to keep carrying out their duties. It foreshadowed a potentially dramatic standoff.

"Nothing and nobody will prevent us from fulfilling the mandate that the people have given us," opposition lawmaker Delsa Solórzano said in a video she shot outside the assembly building Monday morning. "That's why an important number of lawmakers came today, to protect our space and to protect the will of the people."

[Say goodbye to \$2.30 gas if Trump goes hard after Venezuela]

U.S. officials would not say whether Maduro has any U.S. assets. But under the sanctions, he is cut off from accessing the U.S. financial

system, as well as most transactions in dollars, since nearly all dollar-denominated transactions must clear through an American bank at some point. Moreover, non-U. S. banks have become very concerned about doing business with anyone on an American sanctions list.

"I think today's sanction was more of a symbol," said Asdrúbal Oliveros, director of the Caracas-based Ecoanalítica consulting firm. "I don't think Maduro has properties in the U.S. What's relevant is that he's now in a list with the head of North Korea and Syria. You're a dictator, that's why you're there. That is the message."

In addition to the U.S. reaction, Latin American nations from Argentina to Panama to Brazil have also declared the vote illegitimate, with regional foreign ministers set to meet in Peru next week to review the crisis.

Yet the larger question is whether the domestic opposition can sustain the pressure it has brought to bear on Maduro's administration. Simply put, with more than 100 dead and thousands detained in the demonstrations, some people are tired, and even more are scared.

Opposition leaders are facing their own test of public confidence after Sunday's vote.

"Today I feel crushed, but not because of the results, because we knew that the government would cheat," said Victoria Daboin, a 25-year-old who has been protesting since April. "I feel depressed because today everything looks normal, as if nothing had happened. The streets are empty and people went to work as if nothing ever happened. I personally expected more forceful actions from opposition leaders."

Many credit the opposition with bravely challenging a repressive regime. But at a time when the socialist government is signaling a more radical stage of rule, some Venezuelans express concern that no single opposition leader has emerged as Maduro's obvious challenger.

A top contender, opposition leader Leopoldo López, remains under house arrest and sidelined from

public activities. In recent days, the opposition has seemed disorganized, caught flat-footed by a government announcement banning protests through Tuesday.

[Venezuelans release opposition leader Leopoldo López from jail]

"Where's the leader who has mobilized people in the slums because they believe in him?" said Luis Vicente León, director of the Caracas-based pollster Datanálisis. "People in the slums are scared, but when you have a leader you love, that barrier can be overcome. That leader doesn't exist. And there's internal divisions within the coalition on how to confront this situation now."

Analysts say the established opposition here needs to escape the orbit of its past. During the 1980s and 1990s, it was accused of ignoring the poor. Many also criticized it for failing to unite.

Now that polls show Venezuelans desperate for change, the parties have more or less united in the face of the government's growing repression and have made inroads with poorer voters. Still, they amount to factions with varying politics and competing loyalties.

For the opposition, there appears, as of yet, to be no agreement on which tactic is best going forward.

And virtually all options harbor risks.

Some dissident voices here are pressing the opposition to accelerate its move to set up what is essentially a parallel government.

"We won't do anything that is outside the constitution; we don't have the constitutional powers to name a new president," said Solórzano, the opposition lawmaker. "How are we going to combat illegality with more illegality? I understand people's desperation; all of us are doing worse than ever. But we all have to keep going — it's everyone's responsibility, not just leaders."

On July 16, the opposition held an informal referendum in which, it reported, 7.6 million people rejected the creation of the Constituent Assembly. Following that vote, the opposition announced a move to

create its own "government of national unity."

But the opposition's most substantial move in that direction — the selection of magistrates to challenge the authority of the current pro-government Supreme Court — has resulted in three judges being arrested and several others going into hiding.

Some argue that a move to install a

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL.**

Editorial : Venezuela's Mocked Election - WSJ

The Editorial Board

Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro went ahead Sunday with elections for a new assembly, claiming that eight million people voted to replace the sitting legislature. Let it be noted that if Mr. Maduro could legitimately turn out eight million voters like this, he would not have had to precipitate the current crisis by blocking a recall referendum on his regime last year. The questions now are what comes next and what should the U.S. do?

The 545 newly elected representatives are supposed to arrive in Caracas and take their seats within 72 hours of the election. This new constituent assembly will

parallel government could encourage stronger international action that would diplomatically isolate Maduro. But others say that such a move could polarize the nation and trigger a government crackdown that would lead to a larger wave of politically motivated arrests.

There is also a risk that a more violent faction of the opposition will grow, gradually creating a low-grade

conflict. Masked young people have already been seeking to take the fight to the government with rocks and molotov cocktails. And on Sunday, the violence escalated, with an explosive device set by a demonstrator blowing up as a motorcade of government troops passed. Another protester was photographed shooting a gun.

Via Twitter, Venezuelan user @bienlechuga echoed the

frustrations of many government opponents who are calling for more-radical action.

"War will not bring us the best result, but it could put us in a better position in this game," the user wrote.

have absolute sovereignty. They will rewrite the Venezuelan constitution and have the power to make law. They will surely fire the legitimate national assembly, which is controlled by the opposition. Unclear is whether the current assembly will leave their seats by themselves or force the Maduro national guard to remove them.

Mr. Maduro is already threatening to strip the current legislators of legal immunity before their powers are abrogated. The new assembly is also expected to fire Attorney General Luisa Ortega Díaz, an outspoken opponent of Mr. Maduro.

President Trump warned Mr. Maduro that pursuing this course would trigger U.S. sanctions, and on Monday the U.S. followed through

by freezing any assets Mr. Maduro has in the United States. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin called the election "illegitimate" and Mr. Maduro a "dictator who disregards the will of the Venezuelan people."

But the statement made no mention of sanctioning oil exports, which are crucial to the regime's survival. Venezuela's access to hard currency depends largely on its export of heavy crude to the U.S. Gulf Coast, where refineries are specially fitted to handle it. A U.S. ban would hurt the Maduro government because it would force the state-owned oil monopoly, PdVSA, to ship to faraway markets that could handle their heavy crude, such as China. The higher shipping costs and the dislocation would

have a material impact on an already shaky PdVSA.

Mr. Trump could also block PdVSA from using the U.S. financial system and ban U.S. companies from doing business in Venezuela. Embargoes are famously porous, and no one expects this one to be airtight. But Venezuela's fiscal dependence on heavy crude exports to the U.S. makes this situation especially suited to American action.

Some will say that oil sanctions can only hurt the Venezuelan people, but they are already suffering extreme deprivation. Some are starving. The U.S. and the willing members of the Organization of American States need to form a united front not to recognize this vote or the regime it has produced.

**NATIONAL
REVIEW
ONLINE**

Lowry : Venezuela Revolution – Misery & Corruption

Venezuela is a woeful reminder that no country is so rich that it can't be driven into the ground by revolutionary socialism.

People are now literally starving — about three-quarters of the population lost weight last year — in what once was the fourth-richest country in the world on a per capita basis. A country that has more oil reserves than Saudi Arabia is suffering shortages of basic supplies. Venezuela now totters on the brink of bankruptcy and civil war, in the national catastrophe known as the Bolivarian Revolution.

The phrase is the coinage of the late Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chávez, succeeded by the current Venezuelan strongman Nicolás Maduro. The Western Hemisphere's answer to Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, Maduro has instituted an ongoing self-coup to make his country a one-party state.

The Chávezistas have worked from the typical Communist playbook of romanticizing the masses while immiserating them. Runaway spending, price controls,

nationalization of companies, corruption, and the end of the rule of law — it's been a master class in how to destroy an economy.

The result is a sharp, years-long recession, runaway inflation, and unsustainable debt. The suffering of ordinary people is staggering, while the thieves and killers who are Chávezista officials have made off with hundreds of billions of dollars. At this rate — *The Economist* calls the country's economic decline "the steepest in modern Latin American history" — there will be nothing left to steal.

Any government in a democratic country that failed this spectacularly would have been relegated to the dustbin of history long ago. Maduro is getting around this problem by ending Venezuela's democracy. The Chávezistas slipped up a year or two by allowing real elections for the country's National Assembly, which were swept by the opposition. They then undertook a war against the assembly, stripping it of its powers and culminating in a rigged vote this week to elect a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution.

The goal of Maduro's alleged constitutional reforms is to no longer have a constitution worthy of the name. All you need to know about the spirit of this exercise is Maduro's threat to jail the opposition leaders who boycotted the vote (outside observers estimate less than 20 percent of the electorate participated, despite the regime's absurd claim of a popular wave of support).

Denied the ordinary means of dissent via the press and elections, the opposition has taken to the streets. Already more than 100 people have been killed in clashes over the past several months. Worse is yet to come. Lacking legitimacy and representing only a fraction of the populace, the Maduro regime will rely on the final backstop of violent suppression. It is now the worst crisis in a major country in the Western Hemisphere since the heights of the Colombian civil war in the 1990s and 2000s.

There is no easy remedy to Venezuela's agony. If meditation were the solution, the country never would have gotten to this pass. Endless negotiations between the

government and the opposition have gone nowhere — the organized-crime syndicate that has seized power under the banner of revolution knows it has no option but to retain its hold on power by any means necessary. The U.S. needs to use every economic and diplomatic lever to undermine the regime and build an international coalition against it.

We should impose more sanctions on specific officials and on the state-run oil company; we should advertise what we know about the details of how Chávezistas park their ill-gotten gains abroad; we should nudge our allies to further isolate the Venezuelan government by pulling ambassadors and breaking diplomatic relations. The hope is that with enough pressure, the regime will crack, and high-level officials will break with Maduro, weakening his position and making a negotiated restoration of democratic rule possible.

In the meantime, the Bolivarian Revolution is proceeding according to its sick logic — and there will be blood.

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More stories by

Mac Margolis

Ballots were still being counted in Venezuela the day after, but one result of the July 30 vote to pick a national assembly to write a new national constitution is already in. The Latin American left, which roundly cheered the vote, is a big loser.

Start with the obvious. Even by the standards of Venezuela's damaged democracy, the plan to write yet another Venezuelan constitution -- the nation's 27th, mind you -- was a travesty. The government never bothered to consult Venezuelans about whether they wanted a new charter, as the current constitution mandates, and answered public outrage over such fiat with brutal repression; some 125 people have died in the backlash since April, at least 10 of them on Sunday.

Thanks to the official rules -- which heavily weighted the vote to regime-friendly districts -- the vast majority of candidates for the 545-member assembly were shills for the ruling socialist party. The new body, conveniently, will have authority over the pesky opposition-controlled national legislature, including the right to disband it altogether and gift Latin America's leading autocrat with even more discretionary powers.

You might think all that would give backers of democracy pause, and yet leading figures on the Latin American left have been all but mute when they haven't outright blessed

the Maduro government's folly and attacked dissenters as capitalist tools or proxies for gringo imperialism.

Brazil's Workers Party, once hailed as a beacon for the new Latin American left, has led the way, with party president Gleisi Hoffmann enjoining the faithful at a meeting of a regional leftist compact to show "support and solidarity" as the Maduro regime faces the "violent offensive of the right" in its "new phase of neoliberal capitalism."

Communist party higher-ups and leftist leaders in Chile and Colombia, and assorted social organizations across Latin America, have hailed Venezuela's hapless leader and offered anodyne talk of peaceful negotiation, forgetting that Maduro's strong-arm tactics have all but obliterated any prayer of dialogue. And although Uruguay's Luis Almagro, the outspoken secretary general of the Organization of American States, has sharply rebuked Venezuela's authoritarian jag (he called Sunday's vote a "day of mourning,") his nation's ruling leftist coalition, the Broad Front, has ingratiated itself to the Bolivarian leader with calls for Venezuelan "self-determination."

Such diffidence before what Amherst College political scientist Javier Corrales has called the "grotesque distortion of democracy" is puzzling, to say the least. After all, a little more than three decades ago, left-wing parties and militants were the targets of some of the world's most ruthless machines of democratic suppression. Leading intellectuals were jailed or exiled for

speaking their minds, when they weren't outright "disappeared" by the juntas' handlers.

The left fought back and rode the return of democracy into mainstream politics, and eventually into presidential palaces across the Americas. But their political fortunes tumbled with the end of the commodities bonanza, a bounty they milked but failed to marshal, and nowhere more dramatically than in Venezuela.

In time, even some of the most sympathetic leftist thinkers began to recant and speak up about the policy failings of hardline left-wing governments, as MIT's marquee public intellectual Noam Chomsky did earlier this year. In May, a list of prominent Latin American intellectuals publicly decried Maduro's assault on democratic institutions and scolded fellow left-wingers who turned a blind eye to the regime's authoritarian turn.

The disaster in Venezuela, and the reversal of fortunes across the region, might have been an opportunity for cashiered left-wing parties to rethink the whack-a-mole anti-Yankee narrative that has long been the default in Latin America. But the indulgences continue, as was clear from the drumroll of kudos for Venezuela's "historic" vote rolling in Monday from Bolivarian sympathizers from Santo Domingo to La Paz.

Of course, a lot of this may be political posturing that has less to do with Venezuela than with domestic agendas. "Going hard left is a way for parties to avoid discussion about

what have went wrong, and the old script of anti-imperialism, and the capitalist menace, generates easy consensus among radicals, allowing them to repair infighting," Corrales told me.

Consider Brazil's Workers Party, or PT, whose spendthrift populist agenda outran the commodities boom, pushing the country into its worst recession on record and bruising austerity. "The PT's main threat today comes not from the right, but from the extreme left parties, who blame the mainstream for being too pragmatic and forsaking ideological commitments," said Oliver Stuenkel, a professor of international relations at the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Sao Paulo.

That may be just politics as usual, but all the jockeying does little for Latin American democracy, which could use new parties and fresh ideas instead of fossils with grudges. A new survey commissioned by Agora!, a Brazilian grassroots political movement, found that 59 percent of those surveyed swore they wouldn't vote for a candidate from Brazil's biggest parties (PMDB, PT and PSDB), while 52 percent said that "only those who have never been a candidate for any party can really bring about the necessary renewal for Brazil."

If Latin America's faltering left is searching for a new script, its leaders would do well to listen to the voices of their constituents, not the noise from Caracas.

the Atlantic

Violence and Claims of Fraud in Venezuela's Controversial Vote

J. Weston Phippen

The White House imposed sanctions Monday on Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, a day after he claimed victory in his attempt to rewrite the Constitution. The sanctions would freeze all Maduro's assets "subject to U.S. jurisdiction" and prohibit any U.S. citizen from doing business with him. In its decision, the U.S. Department of Treasury said Maduro had "deliberately and repeatedly abused the rights of citizens through the use of violence, repression, and criminalization of demonstrations."

Venezuela held a vote Sunday to elect members of a constituent assembly with broad powers that will likely dissolve the opposition's last bastion of strength, the National

Assembly. There was no option to vote against the process—even though 85 percent of the country is reportedly against it—and the opposition boycotted the vote; instead, they filled the streets in protest in what became one of the most violent days in three months.

In the lead up to the vote, the government banned public demonstrations and promised to punish those who tried to disrupt it. At least 10 people were killed Sunday (the opposition says 14), including two teenagers, and a police officer. The night before, an armed group broke into the home of opposition candidate José Félix Pineda and shot him dead. An explosion also injured seven officers as they rode motorcycles through east Caracas, and a video of the blast was widely shared on social media. In it, protesters cheer as the

officers regroup and hurl tear gas at them. In all, more than 120 people have died in the protests in the past few months.

Opposition supporters called Sunday Zero Hour because it was their last chance to preserve their power in government. What happens next is largely unknown, except that the constituent assembly will likely help Maduro consolidate power, transforming the country from a democracy into a dictatorship. For its part, the opposition has promised to continue mass demonstrations.

The rewriting of the constitution was widely condemned by the international community. Even countries that had supported the leftist Venezuelan regime in the past, or remained quiet during its controversies, spoke out against the

vote, including Brazil, Peru, Costa Rica, and Mexico. A group of Latin American leaders, including former-president of Mexico Vicente Fox, had even traveled to the country weeks earlier to act as observers in a non-binding referendum held by the opposition. That vote was a dramatic rebuke of the assembly, with more than 7 million Venezuelans voting against it.

Beating that turnout was important to the government Sunday so it could show the world it still has the support of the people. True figures are still unknown, with the opposition and the government providing vastly different estimates of the turnout. Maduro hailed the day as a "vote for the revolution," and the National Electoral Council said more than 8 million people voted. This would be a little more than 40 percent of voters. But the

opposition called the vote a failure, saying 88 percent of citizens joined the boycott, which would suggest that about 3 million Venezuelans voted. There were no independent observers, and the government banned many news organizations from interviewing people at the polls. Fraud safeguards, such as marking people's fingers with indelible ink to

prevent multiple votes, were also not used.

The U.S. State Department called the vote "flawed" and said it would take "strong and swift actions against the architects of authoritarianism in Venezuela." The sanctions against Maduro are some of the strongest measures the U.S.

has taken, although several members of his regime, including his vice president, have already been sanctioned.

The results of the vote, announced shortly after 7 p.m. local time, stacked the assembly with leaders who've always backed Maduro. Among those who will now rewrite

Venezuela's constitution are Diosdado Cabello, who participated in the failed coup attempt of the 1990s that eventually brought former-President Hugo Chavez to power, and Cilia Flores, Maduro's wife.



Taube : To safeguard our economy, the NAFTA renegotiation process must succeed

Michael Taube, Opinion contributor

On Monday, July 17, the U.S. government released a 17-page document entitled "Summary of Objectives for the NAFTA Renegotiation." The list of demands includes the following: the need to examine "non-tariff barriers that constrain U.S. exports to NAFTA countries," remove "non-tariff barriers to U.S. agricultural exports," "secure commitments from NAFTA countries to provide fair and open conditions for services trade" and establish a dispute settlement system that is "effective, timely ... [and] transparent."

It's a huge relief to see something — anything — in print.

President Trump has blown hot and cold about NAFTA for what seems like an eternity. He's previously called it "the single worst trade deal ever approved in this country" and expressed frustration with the way it has hurt American families and led to cheap, non-unionized Mexican labor in the auto, steel and agricultural sectors.

Yet, Trump told Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during their bilateral meeting in Washington this February that the U.S. has a "very

outstanding trade relationship with Canada," and his strategy would be nothing more than "tweaking" NAFTA. This was followed by a sudden return in April to his first position, where he mused about starting the six-month process to withdraw the U.S. from NAFTA. He had a change of heart less than 24 hours later and moved back to his previous stance of renegotiation.

That's the art of negotiation in the Age of Trump. Change course unexpectedly, cause a short-lived tsunami of political turmoil, laugh/shrug it off, return to your original position (sort of) and repeat. While Trump may enjoy this game, he will cause permanent damage to relations with Canada and Mexico if he keeps employing this tactic.

Moreover, Trump needs to realize that things aren't as bad with NAFTA as he keeps making them out to be.

An April 16, 2015 Congressional Research Service paper also noted that "NAFTA did not cause the huge job losses feared by the critics or the large economic gains predicted by supporters." The "net overall effect of NAFTA on the U.S. economy" has been "relatively modest." A 2003 U.S. International Trade

Commission study also suggested that full implementation would only result in a total GDP increase of between 0.1% to 0.5% — which is exactly what has happened.

NAFTA has also helped reduce tariffs, enhanced financial sectors like the automotive industry, and created more jobs and opportunities for individuals and corporations.

Yes, NAFTA isn't perfect. But the record clearly shows it has led to more economic benefits for the U.S. and its trading partners than financial losses.

That's a far cry from being the worst trade deal of the century, Mr. President.

Some of Trump's frustration with U.S.-Canada trade is understandable. He recently spoke out against Canadian government "supply management" in the dairy sector, which heavily controls product availability and prices. It's a protectionist policy that goes against basic free market principles and should, in fact, be eliminated.

Canada's Liberal government doesn't seem interested in changing this policy and it has legitimate frustration's of its own. Like past Liberal and Tory governments,

Canada disputes the United States' equally protectionist stance in the decades-old softwood lumber dispute and Trump's economic nationalist rhetoric in his "America First" program with business and trade.

If Canada-U.S. relations are going to remain cordial, cooler heads must prevail now and in the future.

Trump in particular should take the lead. He has to stop acting like a bully and governing by decree of bozo eruptions when it comes to political negotiations with Canada (and Mexico). He also needs to start espousing trade liberalization and rejecting tariffs to open up the free market to greater competition and economic success in North America.

Creating a bigger and better NAFTA would be an important economic accomplishment for the White House. While there's little doubt the renegotiation process will be slow and frustrating, it must succeed to ensure that the North American economy remains powerful and successful.



As Washington Churns, the World Grows More Dangerous

Gerald F. Seib

When folks here in Washington end a summer filled with White House hijinks and an epic but inconclusive health-care debate, they will look up and discover something unsettling: The world has become a more dangerous place while everybody has been distracted.

That's most obviously true in North Korea, where its rogue weapons program has leapt so far forward that the nation now has a missile with the range to reach much of the U.S. Pyongyang's capabilities are advancing so quickly that the Defense Intelligence Agency has had to ratchet forward, to as early as next year, its estimate of when it will

have an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.

There is widespread expectation the North Koreans may conduct another missile test in a matter of days, and, perhaps not long down the road, another underground test of a nuclear device.

Meanwhile, American relations with China, the country most able to cooperate in slowing down Pyongyang, are deteriorating amid presidential recriminations—delivered via Twitter—about Beijing's behavior.

Relations with Russia are sliding backward as well, punctuated by the passage of a law imposing new American sanctions and the

Kremlin's decision to kick a stunning 755 diplomats and U.S.-hired staff out of the country in response. Both sides agree that ties now are at their lowest point since the Cold War.

That soured relationship with Russia means it will be tougher to untangle the world's second-messiest problem, behind that Korean nuclear threat: the war in Syria, where the U.S. and Russia are essentially on opposite sides, with forces always on the verge of bumping into one another.

The U.S. also is being challenged by Iran. In possible defiance of new sanctions being imposed by Congress, the Iranians have just launched their own missile into space. Meantime, U.S. forces in the past week have fired both warning

shots and warning flares at Iranian ships acting provocatively in the Persian Gulf.

In case that isn't enough, few paid much attention over the weekend when nuclear-armed Pakistan, also one of the most dangerous places on earth, fell into a governing crisis as its prime minister was ousted amid a scandal that is creating new instability.

Is this all bad coincidence? Mostly, yes. Certainly the Trump administration didn't create all these problems. Still, the spectacle of dysfunction in Washington has the potential to make things worse.

When a president appears weak, distracted or in trouble, as President Donald Trump does right now, the

effects on international affairs can play out on many fronts. First, adversaries may feel more emboldened to challenge a besieged American leader. That may be a miscalculation, but the chances of miscalculation go up at such times.

Second, there always is the suspicion that a president embattled at home is looking for a distraction abroad. Even if there's a real crisis, there would be charges the White House is pumping it up to divert attention. "Wag the Dog" suspicions are never far beneath the surface.

In any case, the president's pattern of engaging in exaggerations and outright misstatements has downside risks in a dangerous

international environment. When the leader of the free world speaks in a time of genuine crisis, he needs his countrymen to believe him and the rest of the world to take him seriously. On the world stage, calm and understated usually beats bluster.

Third, when a president is thought to be distracted or in trouble, Congress steps in to fill what it perceives to be a void. That's what happened during Watergate, when lawmakers voted to cut funding for the war in Vietnam and passed the War Powers Act to limit a president's hand in military operations abroad.

Was this congressional mindset at work in recent days when Congress passed legislation imposing more

sanctions on Russia, Iran and North Korea? Probably; at a minimum, lawmakers worried that Mr. Trump otherwise would be soft on the Kremlin after a campaign in which he talked of wanting to improve relations, and amid accusations Moscow worked to help him win.

But in the process, the legislation also blocked the president from rolling back sanctions without congressional approval, a provision that severely limits presidential flexibility in conducting foreign policy. Mr. Trump doesn't like it, and neither will future presidents if that becomes the pattern. Congressional action is a blunt tool for handling the finer points of international affairs. Mistrust of the president has

produced what may be a bad precedent.

Of all these problems, the North Korean one is the most urgent and dangerous. Mr. Trump is right when he says China hasn't done what it could to curb North Korea: At this point, Beijing's true intentions have to be considered suspect. The grim reality, though, is that China's balkiness leaves few options, and no good ones, for dealing with the threat.

And that's a problem a lot more important than who's up and who's down in the White House this week.

ETATS-UNIS

POLITICO Scaramucci's short, wild ride through Trump's White House

By JOSH DAWSEY,
ANNIE KARNI and TARA PALMERI

Financier Anthony Scaramucci came into his new role as White House communications director threatening "to fire everybody."

Ten days later, he was pushed out before lunch by John Kelly, the chief of staff who replaced the chief of staff Scaramucci was instrumental in pushing out.

Telling Scaramucci he needed to go was one of Kelly's first acts after being sworn in Monday. The retired Marine general was amazed Scaramucci hadn't been disciplined for his profane rants about other West Wing aides published in *The New Yorker* and couldn't imagine him staying in the West Wing, several White House officials said. Scaramucci was spotted at the swearing-in ceremony, looking grim—but at that point still unaware of what was coming, said people familiar with how the day unfolded.

Scaramucci arrived at work Monday, Kelly's first day, with a plan to announce changes in the communications team — a move intended to further marginalize staff brought from the Republican National Committee. Instead, Kelly told him he needed to go, meeting with Scaramucci in his West Wing

office without President Donald Trump present.

"No way could he work with Kelly," one White House official said. "His antics over the past week were crazy by any standard."

"The president certainly felt that Anthony's comments were inappropriate for someone in that position and he didn't want to burden Gen. Kelly also with that line of succession," Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House press secretary, told reporters later in the day.

The reality, described in interviews by more than a half-dozen administration officials and others close to the White House, was even more complicated. Scaramucci's arrival in the West Wing six months into Trump's presidency seemed to herald a return to the visceral and brash New York ways of the campaign — and a rejection of the clubby, more buttoned-up instincts of Republican operatives brought into the administration by Priebus from the RNC. Instead, it brought more chaos to a White House defined by disorder.

Scaramucci spoke in a thick New York accent and appeared to share the profane and wheeling-dealing business ways of his boss. He brought a swagger into the White House that many other staffers lacked, staring down aides, bursting into rooms and making it known he

was in charge. Sean Spicer, the outgoing press secretary, resigned after warning Scaramucci would do damage to the administration. Chief strategist Steve Bannon and former chief of staff Reince Priebus opposed his appointment, too, though Priebus tried to tell others after the fact that he loved Scaramucci. An assistant press secretary, Michael Short, resigned last week, after Scaramucci told POLITICO he planned to fire him.

"I can tell you two fish that don't stink, that's me and the president," Scaramucci said when taking the job.

He threatened leakers publicly and privately and bragged about breaking White House rules of West Wing employees contacting Department of Justice officials, though it was unclear if he actually did it.

In meetings, Scaramucci repeatedly reminded aides that he wasn't "one of them," one White House official said. He often talked about his close personal relationship with the president and the autonomy and leeway he had to make decisions, this official said.

In the few meetings he held with communications staffers, he mostly just talked about his desire to cut off embarrassing "leaks" of anonymous quotes from inside the West Wing — and to fire anyone who had been talking to the press, according to

one person familiar with the meetings. He would cut off former RNC staffers, telling them, "I know you've been serving two masters in this place" — meaning the president and Priebus, whom Scaramucci believed had been undermining the administration.

"I really believe he was on track to fire everybody," said the person familiar with the meetings. "Sarah would try and keep the meeting on track, and he would interrupt to talk about leaks and firing everybody."

Even though he wasn't originally supposed to start his new post until August, Scaramucci began chiming in right away with communications strategy ideas — which were sometimes overruled.

For instance, Scaramucci suggested having senior adviser Jared Kushner address reporters in the White House briefing room, from behind the lectern, following his closed-door testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee on his contacts with Russian officials last year.

Sanders, however, suggested the optics of Scaramucci's suggestion would "elevate it too much," according to the source. Scaramucci ultimately deferred on the decision to Sanders, and Kushner delivered his statement on the driveway outside the White House. Sanders did not respond to

a request for comment about the incident.

At first, Trump seemed to appreciate the bluster and braggadocio.

Scaramucci had a smooth and friendly on-camera appearance in the White House briefing room on July 21, the day his new position was announced. Spicer's tenure had been marked by combative exchanges with reporters, and the briefings were largely moved off camera until Scaramucci took over. He ended his first tete-a-tete with the White House press corps by blowing them a kiss.

Trump "really liked" his first appearance, one person who spoke to Trump said. Scaramucci would spend much of his early days talking to Trump about personnel and policy issues.

Last week, the president attended a dinner with Scaramucci where Priebus was fiercely criticized. Trump mused with Scaramucci about the then-chief-of-staff's shortcomings and told others he wanted Priebus and Bannon out of

the White House. Bannon continued to simmer in his frustrations.

But the strange episode that unfolded last Wednesday — when Scaramucci appeared to threaten Priebus with an FBI investigation for leaking his financial disclosure, which Priebus didn't do, set his downfall in motion. In profane comments to *The New Yorker*, published Thursday, Scaramucci accused Priebus of being paranoid and Bannon of twisting himself in contortions to stroke his own ego.

At first, Trump didn't show anger about the comments, telling others privately that he agreed with some of Scaramucci's sentiments. Priebus resigned.

The comments mortified Kelly, who demanded control over the West Wing. And Trump, soaking in several days of negative news coverage about his administration in turmoil, began to realize the comments were a bigger deal than he'd initially believed. One administration official said Trump was also told by a number of friends and outside advisers that Scaramucci was going to become a bigger problem.

The comments upset Trump's daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Kushner, both of whom had wanted Spicer to stay with the administration in a different role, according to a person familiar with the couple's thinking. "They wanted Scaramucci to come on so Priebus would leave," one person with direct knowledge of their thinking said. "He did what he had to do, which was take out Reince."

Another White House official said: "They're supportive of Kelly and going to follow his lead."

By late in the weekend, Scaramucci knew his job could be in jeopardy. One person who spoke to Scaramucci before he showed up to work Monday said he was concerned about his job security but continued to think *The New Yorker* comments might blow over and his job might be saved, this person said. He was planning to announce communications hires soon.

Scaramucci did not respond to repeated phone calls and text messages seeking comment.

After being told he would be let go, Scaramucci seemed shaken up but

stayed on the White House grounds until early afternoon, said one official. Senior staff were informed at 1:45 p.m., by Kelly, the official said. Scaramucci was not in the room for that meeting.

It's not clear whether Scaramucci will remain in the administration. In June, he was appointed to a position with the Export-Import Bank, which he left upon assuming his White House role, and may return there, according to a person familiar with his thinking.

In the wake of Scaramucci's dismissal, Spicer was seen in the West Wing looking "happy," said one person who saw him. Kelly and other senior aides joined Trump in the East Room for a Medal of Honor ceremony as the news broke, and was described in pool reports "smiling and appears in good spirits."

"Great day at the White House!" Trump tweeted late Monday.



Martelle : Exit, Scaramucci, the political suicide bomber

Scott Martelle

If the Trump administration has taught the nation anything, it's that all appointees' names should be written down in pencil. Within hours of taking the oath of office Monday, the new White House chief of staff, and former general, John Kelly ousted Anthony Scaramucci, who had won a surprise appointment as communications director just 10 short days ago.

But, oh, what a run it was — with apologies to John Reed, it was 10 days that shook the West Wing.

As soon as Scaramucci, whose background is in hedge funds and not political communications, appeared at the White House bazaar, you knew an explosion was imminent.

With apologies to John Reed, it was 10 days that shook the West Wing.

Let's recap. At the end of May, Mike Dubke, a Republican strategist who never fit in with the amateurs in the West Wing, resigned. The post sat vacant until 10 days ago, when Trump appointed Scaramucci, a decision so poor that the oft-lampooned Sean Spicer

immediately resigned as press secretary.

Scaramucci took to the press room lectern and didn't mess up, which is a low bar but one that has been surprisingly difficult for Trump's communications office to clear.

Then came the Senate's failure to repeal Obamacare, apparently without much in the way of wrangling by the White House communications director (that would be Scaramucci).

The next day, Scaramucci set the timer for the end of his own run in the White House after ringing up a *New Yorker* magazine writer demanding to know the source of a leak (good luck with that) and proceeded to attack his new colleagues in scandalous language that led to unusual discussions about the flexibility of the male human body.

Beyond turning an uncomfortable focus on Scaramucci, the interview suddenly made the fight over "repeal and replace" a sideshow to Scaramucci's drama. And remember, in a P.T. Barnum White House, there can only be one ringmaster in the spotlight.

Scaramucci also said in the interview that Reince Priebus, Trump's "paranoid schizophrenic, a paranoiac" chief of staff, will "be asked to resign very shortly." Priebus was gone the next day. The same day, the *New York Post* reported that Scaramucci's wife had filed for divorce over his political ambitions. And note that Scaramucci had already sold his hedge fund-related company, Skybridge Capital, to a Chinese firm (a sale now under regulatory review).

It was not a good day for "The Mooch."

US President Donald Trump's new chief of staff was sworn in Monday morning. Ret. General John Kelly took the oath behind closed doors. Moments later, Trump spoke to the press, sayi ...

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Trump announced as he fired Priebus that Kelly, the secretary for Homeland Security, would become chief of staff effective Monday. Kelly's voice taking the oath of office was still echoing in the White House this morning when Scaramucci got the boot, ending a bizarre cycle of comings and goings that, once again, delays White

House efforts to put together any sort of agenda and confirms that the nation elected a man as president who has no idea how to do the job.

It's tempting, of course, to see Kelly's rise and Scaramucci's deserved ouster as an early signal that there might now be a professional, and forceful, adult in a powerful seat in the White House, finally lending an air of coherence to the ingrained dysfunction.

That would be welcome, but the man at the big desk in the Oval Office is still Trump, so Kelly would be smart not to make any long-term plans. Trump's near-and-dear — his daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner — still have the president's ear in a way that Kelly likely will not have, though how much they have influenced what little policy has emanated from the White House is hard to measure.

In the end, Scaramucci's rise and fall may hold no other lesson than that Trump's radar for picking the best and brightest has serious glitches, and that the president — who demands so much loyalty from others — has zero loyalty to his allies.

And that the drama will go on. But is it farce or tragedy?



The Spectacular Self-Destruction of Anthony Scaramucci

Anthony Scaramucci's reign as White House communications director—a reign of terror and vulgarity, marked by two outlandish interviews and the departures of two top West Wing officials—has ended, just 10 days after it began.

The New York Times broke the news Monday afternoon, just hours after Trump tweeted that there was “No W[hite] H[ouse] chaos!” It was not clear whether Scaramucci would take another post in the administration or exit altogether. His firing reportedly came at the behest of John Kelly, who was installed as chief of staff on Monday, three days after Scaramucci forced out Kelly's predecessor.

Even in an administration that has set records for quick departures—National-Security Adviser Michael Flynn, Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, and Press Secretary Sean Spicer are all among the shortest-serving figures in their respective jobs—Scaramucci's flameout was fast and phenomenal.

The financier was in the mix for White House jobs since the start of Trump's administration, but he kept missing out. His first job, as business liaison, failed to materialize when the sale of his

hedge fund was delayed. A series of other jobs likewise fell through. Scaramucci was patient and persistent, hanging around in Washington and taking a temporary job at the Export-Import Bank, waiting for his opening. It finally came two weeks ago, when Scaramucci was named communications director. That appointment came over the objection of several top Trump advisers, including Priebus, chief strategist Steve Bannon, and Spicer.

Spicer was the first to go, resigning the same day Scaramucci's was named. The fight with Priebus took longer to crest. On Wednesday, *Politico* obtained Scaramucci's personal financial disclosure through a routine request, but Scaramucci blamed Priebus for “leaking it,” lodging the accusation first in a tweet and then in a CNN interview Thursday morning. Later that day, *The New Yorker* published an interview in which Scaramucci railed against Priebus, calling him a felon and a “fucking paranoid schizophrenic.” (He also accused Bannon of engaging in autofellatio, presumably figuratively.) By Friday afternoon, Priebus was out.

It was an impressively fast act of revenge on Priebus for trying to block him, but Scaramucci soared too fast, too high. The interview was

an embarrassment, even by the lowered standards of this administration. And for Kelly, who faces the task of whipping a fractious West Wing into place, Scaramucci—who had bragged about reporting directly to the president, bypassing the chief of staff—represented too loose a cannon. And so as fast as he arrived, Scaramucci was out, having self-destructed. It's been a rough season for Scaramucci, who sold his beloved hedge fund to work for Trump, got a top job, and then saw his marriage and job both crumble.

For those who have watched this administration closely, it's no surprise that the impetus for firing Scaramucci came not from Trump but from Kelly. Trump is, despite his catchphrase, extremely reluctant to fire anyone. Despite rocky relationships with many staffers—Trump has spent the last two weeks publicly ridiculing his own attorney general—most people who have left either the administration or his presidential campaign did so by resigning or after others insisted they leave, not because Trump himself told them they had to go. It is a tentative first sign that Kelly might be able to grasp the authority he needs to help get the White House functioning better.

The move leaves Trump once again without a communications director.

The office has proven to have something of a curse. The first person named to the job, Jason Miller, withdrew before taking over. Spicer served on an interim basis until Mike Dubke was named to the post in February, but Dubke resigned in May after an ineffectual term. Spicer then once again stepped in until Scaramucci's appointment. It's unclear who will serve in the role now. Deputy Press Secretary Sarah H. Sanders was promoted to press secretary the same day Scaramucci took over.

Speaking to CNN on Thursday morning, Scaramucci acknowledged that while he had said he was like a brother to Priebus, some brothers had relationships like the one between the biblical brothers Cain and Abel, the former of whom slew the latter. Scaramucci did not say whether it was he or Priebus who represented Cain in that situation, but by Friday evening it appeared clear that Priebus was Abel. With the benefit of a few more days, it's now clear that the better analogy comes not from the Bible but from Sophocles' *Antigone*, and the cases of Eteocles and Polyneices—mutual fratricides, killed on the battlefield of a civil war.



Stanley : Why Scaramucci had to go

Timothy Stanley

4-5 minutes

(CNN)Donald Trump has had three communications directors since May. If the President's goal was to communicate utter chaos, it's working. Our only hope now is that the chaos is coming to an end.

Anthony Scaramucci, whose tenure ended Monday with an announcement from Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, made it just 10 days into his job -- 10 days that have to go down as some of the most bizarre in political history.

In his defense, he appeared sincerely to love his President and has paid a high personal price for his loyalty. His then-pregnant wife filed for a divorce, which her lawyer insists had nothing to do with Trump, and Scaramucci missed the birth of his son last week. For what?

To have his

professional reputation potentially ruined by a job he should never have been offered.

He was caught ranting to a journalist about his co-workers, whom he described as paranoid and mentally ill. Trump “loved” the outburst, according to Axios; the new chief of staff, John Kelly, evidently did not. Scaramucci was sacked on Kelly's orders. The former retired US Marine Corps general intends to run a tighter ship.

And that's the best spin on this farce that I can give: Kelly made a swift assessment of Scaramucci's character, took decisive action and has asserted his authority.

My suspicion is that while Trump probably enjoyed Scaramucci, he's more likely to respect Kelly. Army men cast a spell over him. How else to explain his defense of Mike Flynn, his former security adviser?

Flynn, of course, went early. Later went Reince Priebus, formerly chief

of staff, and Sean Spicer, formerly press secretary.

This fast turnover is highly unusual: it tells us many things. That Trump can be hard to work for, perhaps. That his unusual election victory left chaos behind, certainly. It has necessitated improvisation and unsustainable balancing acts.

As a link to the Republicans on the Hill, Priebus once seemed necessary. But that link has proven hard to maintain and produced small returns: what has Trump gained by backing the GOP's hugely unpopular healthcare reform?

The unorthodox nature of advisers like Flynn or Scaramucci, by contrast, reflects Trump's anti-establishment instincts. At least Scaramucci was genuinely eccentric. Spicer, one always sensed, was trying to appear far wilder and angrier than he really was. That's what often happens when you have a charismatic boss:

the weaker staff members, desperate to please, act up and let themselves and everyone else down.

Trump doesn't need showmanship. He needs competence.

In fact, this latest comedic twist might actually be a sign of competence breaking through. Kelly has obviously been given full authority to clean things up. Sacking Scaramucci is proof that he intends to use it. From this, a greater sense of order and direction will hopefully flow. The only man who can undermine it is the only man with the authority greater than Kelly: the President. And he'd be really, truly, ridiculously foolish to try.

Hopefully this is the final firing. If not, it may well go on until the bitter end, when the news ticker across the bottom of your TV screen says “Donald Trump sacks himself.”



Feldman : Anthony Scaramucci's Firing Was a Win for Political Norms

@NoahRFeldman More stories by Noah Feldman

The short life of Anthony Scaramucci as White House communications director will be

remembered with joy by some, or at least by me. His unbridled self-expression, in the grandest

traditions of the First Amendment and the New York street corner,

was more like a tornado of fresh air than a mere breath.

But the era of the Mooch was also guaranteed to be as brief as the life of a mayfly -- for a serious reason. Important jobs like managing the president's relationship with the press come with norms and customs: unwritten rules that shape social relations in every culture, and that are based on cumulative wisdom and many decades (sometimes centuries) of trial and error. In his millisecond of public service, Scaramucci violated a stunning number of those norms, violations that could not be tolerated, even by President Donald Trump.

The lesson of the Scaramucci episode is therefore crucial for the Trump administration going forward. Norms can be shifted, altered and changed; it's always a mistake to assume they are invariant or inflexible. But well-established norms can't be entirely flouted without serious consequences -- like a White House in disarray, despite protests to the contrary.

It's understandable that Trump's closest advisers would consider themselves ideal for changing-making in the realm of unwritten customs. After all, they all took part in his history-making campaign.

And that campaign was characterized by breaking the unwritten rules. Trump repeatedly said more or less whatever was on his mind, and

didn't just get away with it, but profited. Every time he broke a rule that the news media understood based on its own collective experience, it was newsworthy. The result, we now know, was a gigantic quantum of free press -- all of it acquired quite legitimately, by being shocking.

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Even when Trump got attention for breaking the rules unintentionally, as when the audio of his lewd conversation with Billy Bush surfaced, he survived and thrived, in direct contradiction to the conventional wisdom. The last candidate to break the rules unintentionally and get away with it was Bill Clinton; but even he bowed to convention by expressing contrition and regret about his violations. And it's unlikely that Clinton benefited from the publicity attendant on his lapses, as Trump seemed to do.

But running the country turns out to be markedly different from winning a campaign -- and unwritten norms play a subtly different part. I'm talking about political rules of governance that have emerged from past practice.

The big difference is that the political rules almost all involve actors other than the president himself. In a campaign, the question

ultimately comes down to whether voters will tick the box for the candidate. In governance, the question is whether different people holding different roles will cooperate on common projects.

Trump's health-care debacle is a simple example. Instead of leading with a plan, as President Barack Obama did, Trump deferred to Congress -- and was unable (so far) to muster sufficient consensus within his own party to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Scaramucci's norm-breaking was similar, if more spectacular and a good deal more entertaining. At the risk of stating the obvious, the White House communications director can't act as though he's the kingmaker for the entire administration.

That means, of course, that he can't denounce other senior White House staff in any way -- much less scatologically, autoerotically and on the record.

The key point here isn't so much the vulgarity, which was kind of beautiful in its outrageous way. Rather, it's that the communications director can't be the one to tell the world that the president's chief of staff, who outranks him, is about to be fired.

The moment Scaramucci foretold the firing of Reince Priebus, he was writing the chronicle of another political death foretold: his own.

No new chief of staff could conceivably tolerate a communications director who believed he could outflank a chief of staff. When it comes to hierarchical authority, in the end, there can be only one chief. So long as the communications director is a member of the White House staff, he has to fall under the chief.

So it wouldn't have taken a retired general like John Kelly. Any new chief of staff was going to cut Scaramucci loose. Those are the rules, whether you can find them in a book or not.

Part of Scaramucci's charm was his apparent belief that the rules didn't apply to him. When the violation is serious, we call this hubris, after the Greek tragedians. When the violation is more minor, we call it chutzpah, after the Jewish comedians.

The takeaway is that norms matter, because they constrain and direct us to act in ways that enable us to cooperate and get along. Left to their own devices, the Scaramuccis of the world -- they are legion, and of all parties -- would act out their own impulses, heedless of consequences. But getting things done requires limitations, self-restraints to facilitate working together.

Breaking the rules is more fun than almost anything. And there's always a price to pay.



Goldberg : Power changes standards, from language to the length of your tie

Jonah Goldberg

A friend of mine who attended the Conservative Political Action Conference this year -- I skipped it -- reported to me that the Young Republican men were "wearing their ties down past their [crotches]."

I cleaned up the quote a bit for the benefit of a family newspaper.

Though I'm not sure why I should bother when a White House communications director has helped so many staid institutions expand their horizons. As my National Review colleague Kyle Smith noted, the New York Times has a long history of insisting that vulgarities do not meet the definition of news fit to print. For instance, it is the Times' standard practice to render a colloquialism for speaking gross untruths that combines the male of the bovine species with the fully processed product of what it consumes as a "barnyard epithet."

But in the wake of just-deposed White House Communications Director Anthony Scaramucci's profanity-laced, on-the-record tirade with a New Yorker reporter, the Grey Lady went blue. It printed, sans bowdlerization, words and phrases that surely would have been just as relevant to its coverage of President Lyndon Johnson, to say nothing of Bill Clinton.

There's fierce competition to be as vulgar as possible or to be as vigorous as possible in defending presidential vulgarity.

My point here is not to criticize the Times' double standards (there will be plenty of opportunities down the road for that). It's to note that politics or, more accurately, power, has a funny way of changing standards.

Which brings me back to those ties. I've been around young conservatives since I was one myself. And it's always interesting to see how fashion changes. When

the first President Bush was in office, blue blazers were a kind of unofficial uniform for young men eager to mimic what then-Bush aide Tory Clarke called "the C-SPAN-and-galoshes" crowd surrounding the president.

When the second Bush was in office, the cowboy boot retailers near Young America's Foundation chapters must have seen a huge increase in sales.

And now, because the president of the United States wears abnormally long power ties -- presumably to hide his girth -- one sees more and more twentysomething men sporting the new cravat codpiece.

This is not a phenomenon unique to conservatives. While it's an urban legend that JFK's alleged refusal to wear a fedora to his inaugural killed the hat industry, countless young liberals with political ambitions tried to replicate the way Kennedy talked. When Franklin Roosevelt was a kid, he ostentatiously mimicked his

distant cousin, Teddy, wearing those pince-nez glasses and shouting "bully!"

So about those barnyard epithets. It's hard to miss how so many rank-and-file Republicans relish the president's crude taunts and insults. Nor is it easy to overlook the fact that the president seemed perfectly comfortable with Scaramucci speaking like a "Sopranos" character.

Not long ago, it fell to conservatives such as Bill Bennett, Ralph Reed, Tony Perkins or Mike Huckabee to denounce vulgarity wherever they saw it. And while these men don't publicly condone Trump's language they essentially roll their eyes at anyone who makes much of a fuss. And among the rank and file on Twitter and Facebook etc., there's fierce competition to be as vulgar as possible or to be as vigorous as possible in defending presidential vulgarity.

Of course, the president is not only changing standards — he's the product of them. Over the last decade or so, a whole cottage industry of young anti-left sensationalists has embraced the romantic slogan *Épater la bourgeoisie!* Their crudeness isn't a bug, it's a feature.



Friedman : Scaramucci tenure was short but he left a lasting media legacy

Jon Friedman, Opinion contributor
Published 7:00 a.m. ET Aug. 1, 2017

The designated communications director set new and probably permanent depths of vulgarity for what is fit to publish.

When Anthony Scaramucci let loose with an X-rated diatribe to a reporter from *The New Yorker*, the short-lived White House communications director amazed and amused a nation already feeling somewhat punch-drunk from a succession of President Trump's tirades. Scaramucci promptly dominated the cable news programs and gave late-night talk-show hosts juicy material to boot. And then, suddenly, he was gone.

But forget the guffawing for a moment. The pundits missed the real lasting impact of the shoot-from-the-hip vulgarity of Trump's swaggering "Mini-Me." The president's verbal hit man scored a decisive victory in the administration's drive to make

The rising vulgar tide is typically justified either by the need to seem authentic or as genuflection to the sacred right to fight political correctness. Never mind that not everything that is politically incorrect is therefore correct. (William F. Buckley was not P.C., but he had

America crass.

With his cursing and general crudity, sadly, Scaramucci lowered the bar just a little more on our culture's accepted standards of civility, just as Trump did during his presidential campaign when a television clip revealed him to brag about how he, as a celebrity, could grab women in private places and get away with it.

The proof is in the media. *The New Yorker* kicked off the free-for-all by publishing Scaramucci's remarks verbatim, no asterisks or trigger warnings. So did *The Washington Post*, *Buzzfeed* and even the sacred *New York Times*, the Good Gray Lady that often sets standards for the industry. It's clear we are already living in a brave new world. In 14 years at the *New York Post* and *New York Daily News* combined, tweeted *New York Times* reporter Maggie Haberman, "I don't think I ever (had) a byline over a word rhyming w clock."

Suddenly, a transcript of a screed by a trusted Trump friend and associate can serve as the basis for

the best manners of anyone I ever met.)

And the competition to seem verbally authentic has spilled over the ideological retaining wall. The Democratic National Committee sells a T-shirt that reads "Democrats Give a S*** About People." Several leading Democrats

a script for *Goodfellas*, Part 2. (As many people have suggested, Joe Pesci would have to be the favorite to be cast as Scaramucci himself in such a Martin Scorsese-helmed dramedy). USA TODAY, the Associated Press and several networks did resort to asterisks, dashes and euphemisms, but how long before TV and other outlets follow the example of the *Times*?

We can call it The Trump Effect. Sure, we have had presidents who used raunchy language, especially Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. But Trump's crude talk is more troublesome than a frustrated president venting.

He is no stranger to gross chatter, as we saw in the *Access Hollywood* "grab 'em by the p---y" clip with television personality Billy Bush. And now it is up to the news media to play umpire and decide what language is fair or foul and what is suitable for quoting in time-honored "family newspapers."

The *Access Hollywood* video was an early test for the U.S. media. *The New Yorker* and the *New York*

have started dropping F-bombs and other phrases, seemingly as a way to prove their populist street cred.

I guess we'll know this race to the bottom is over when socialist hero Sen. Bernie Sanders starts wearing his ties past his fly.

Times were among the publications that published an unedited version of Trump's lewd remarks. They showed they were up to (down to?) the challenge of covering a president who was setting standards for unseemly comments.

Trump set a profane tone for last week by telling the bewildered Boy Scouts, "Who the hell wants to speak about politics when I'm in front of the Boy Scouts?" Scaramucci, like the president, says whatever is on his mind. And like the president, he scorns the tenets of political correctness.

White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said Monday that Trump considers Scaramucci's comments "inappropriate." But amid the fallout from his potty-mouthed rant, we should not overlook one particularly telling fact: Trump did not say that when the Scaramucci interview was published. In fact, Mike Allen of *Axios* reported Friday, "We're told the President loved the Mooch quotes."



UNE - John Kelly, Asserting Authority, Fires Anthony Scaramucci

Michael D. Shear, Glenn Thrush and Maggie Haberman

WASHINGTON — John F. Kelly, President Trump's new chief of staff, firmly asserted his authority on his first day in the White House on Monday, telling aides he will impose military discipline on a free-for-all West Wing, and he underscored his intent by firing Anthony Scaramucci, the bombastic communications director, 10 days after he was hired.

Mr. Scaramucci was forced out of his post, with the blessing of the president and his family, just days after unloading a crude verbal tirade against other members of the president's staff, including Reince Priebus, Mr. Kelly's beleaguered predecessor, and Stephen K. Bannon, the chief White House strategist, in a conversation with a reporter for *The New Yorker*.

Mr. Trump recruited Mr. Scaramucci as a tough-talking alter ego who would ferociously fight for him the way others had not. But "the Mooch," as he likes to be known, quickly went too far, even in the eyes of a president who delights in pushing the boundaries of political and social decorum. As Mr. Kelly, a former four-star Marine general, began his first day on the job, Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House press secretary, announced that Mr. Scaramucci was out.

"The president certainly felt that Anthony's comments were inappropriate for a person in that position," Ms. Sanders said. "He didn't want to burden General Kelly, also, with that line of succession."

In a post to Twitter just hours before the announcement, Mr. Trump insisted that there had been "No WH chaos!" Yet even as he sought to reassure supporters that all was well, several administration aides fretted that the impetuous president

and the disciplined Marine were already on a collision course that could ultimately doom the unlikely partnership.

Mr. Kelly, the first former general to occupy the gatekeeper's post since Alexander Haig played that role for President Richard M. Nixon during Watergate, is charged with quelling the chaos that has defined, distracted and often derailed Mr. Trump's White House. But the president gave Mr. Priebus many of the same assurances of control, and then proceeded to undercut and ignore him — to the point where Mr. Priebus often positioned himself at the door of the Oval Office to find out whom the president was talking to.

In his brief time at the White House, Mr. Scaramucci seemed to epitomize its chaos. A wealthy New York financier, he burst onto the political scene with a memorable performance in the White House briefing room, where he portrayed

himself as a major, new player who had been assured he would report directly to the president, without the interference of intermediaries like Mr. Priebus or Sean Spicer, the president's first press secretary.

It was soon clear that Mr. Scaramucci would not be a fixture of the administration, but a transitory figure who created an opportunity for Mr. Trump, with his daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner, to undertake the far-reaching shake-up intended to purge the White House staff of leakers and aides viewed as not sufficiently loyal to his cause.

Mr. Spicer quit the day Mr. Scaramucci was hired; Mr. Priebus left shortly after the rant in which Mr. Scaramucci accused him of undermining the president through leaks of information to reporters.

The brief and tumultuous tenure of Anthony Scaramucci. Plus: how

President Putin's bet on a Trump presidency backfired spectacularly.

Mr. Kelly, who was Mr. Trump's first secretary of homeland security, arrives at a critical juncture, when the president is confronted with North Korea's growing nuclear ambitions, Russia's aggressive diplomatic moves and continuing fighting in Iraq and Syria. The new chief of staff will also be charged with reviving a stalled legislative agenda. Mr. Trump's campaign promise to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act ended in failure last week, and there has been little progress on other major goals like overhauling taxes or rebuilding the nation's infrastructure.

And despite his desire for discipline, it took only hours on Monday for Mr. Kelly to face his first White House leak, and it was about him. CNN reported that Mr. Kelly had been so upset about the president's firing of James B. Comey as F.B.I. director in May that he called Mr. Comey to say he was considering resigning, an account that was confirmed by a former law enforcement official who was told of the conversation.

Mr. Kelly resisted the president's entreaties to take over for Mr. Priebus during the past several weeks. After his appointment was announced on Friday, he met with Mr. Trump and demanded assurances that he would wield the usual sweeping authority over personnel, the flow of information and access to the Oval Office that chiefs of staff have traditionally been given.

In early morning staff meetings at the White House on Monday, Mr. Kelly made it

clear that the president had agreed to let him impose more discipline over what had been an unruly and inefficient decision-making and communications process under Mr. Priebus, who had none of Mr. Kelly's experience in government or the military.

Mr. Kelly also made it clear that everyone in the staff — including Mr. Bannon, Ms. Trump and Mr. Kushner — would clear policy proposals, personnel recommendations and advice from outsiders through him.

"General Kelly has the full authority to operate within the White House, and all staff will report to him," Ms. Sanders told reporters later. But she added that Mr. Trump would decide how that would work.

Mr. Scaramucci's fall and Mr. Kelly's rise highlighted the diminished but still important role in shaping the West Wing played by Ms. Trump and Mr. Kushner, both of whom serve in the White House as senior advisers to the president.

Ms. Trump and Mr. Kushner had hoped to persuade Mr. Trump to appoint Dina Powell, the deputy national security adviser, as chief of staff. Mr. Trump, who likes Ms. Powell, considered doing so, but later — when it became apparent that Mr. Trump had settled on hiring Mr. Kelly — the pair supported the choice of the general, according to people involved in the White House's internal discussions.

While Mr. Kelly's concerns were the decisive factor in Mr. Scaramucci's departure, they said, it was clear that Mr. Trump had quickly soured on the wisecracking, Long Island-

bred former hedge fund manager, and so had his family.

President Trump with John F. Kelly, the new White House chief of staff, in the Oval Office on Monday. Doug Mills/The New York Times

Ms. Trump and Mr. Kushner had initially pushed the president to hire Mr. Scaramucci, seeing him as a way to force out Mr. Priebus, the former Republican National Committee chairman, and his allies in the West Wing, like Mr. Spicer.

Mr. Spicer resigned just hours after Mr. Scaramucci's hiring was made public. And shortly after Mr. Scaramucci called Mr. Priebus a "paranoid schizophrenic, a paranoid" — adding a more vulgar term to the beginning of the phrase — Mr. Priebus, too, offered his resignation.

Mr. Trump was initially pleased by Mr. Scaramucci's harsh remarks, directed at Mr. Priebus as well as Mr. Bannon. But that view seemed to change as people around Mr. Trump told him that Mr. Scaramucci's over-the-top performances were not well received.

In addition, Mr. Scaramucci seemed to be, at least for the moment, overshadowing him — a fact that Breitbart News, which Mr. Bannon used to run, pointed out in a headline describing Mr. Trump as second fiddle to his communications director.

Over the weekend, after speaking with his family and Mr. Kelly — who refused to even consider retaining Mr. Scaramucci — the president began to see the brash actions of

his newly high-profile subordinate as a political liability, according to three people familiar with his thinking.

For the time being, the White House may leave the communications director post open, said a person close to the internal discussions about the job, though Mr. Kelly has the latitude from Mr. Trump to fill the post with someone from the Department of Homeland Security.

Two perennial candidates to fill the post are Kellyanne Conway, a White House senior adviser and the president's former campaign manager, and Jason Miller, who held the communications post during the campaign. Mr. Trump has long wanted to bring Mr. Miller, who serves as an informal adviser, into the administration.

Mr. Kelly's bond with the president is based on Mr. Trump's affinity for generals, whom he views as can-do leaders, and a belief that Mr. Kelly is a "star" of the administration, delivering on the promise to secure the border and toughen immigration enforcement.

But the choice was also part of a bet that Mr. Kelly can tame a White House that has at times seemed out of control, even to those inside it. On Monday, after a day that included a cabinet meeting and a ceremony to present the Medal of Honor, Mr. Trump seemed eager for the normalcy that has so far eluded him.

At 6:19 p.m., he said on Twitter: "A great day at the White House!"

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

UNE - Scaramucci Removed as White House Communications Director at Kelly's Urging

Rebecca Ballhaus and Michael C. Bender

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump ousted his communications director after only 10 days and introduced his new chief of staff, a former Marine Corps general who has the task of imposing more discipline in the West Wing, following one of the most turbulent weeks of the administration.

Anthony Scaramucci was removed from the communications director post on Monday, becoming the seventh major administration official to leave in Mr. Trump's first six months. Mr. Scaramucci was ousted at the urging of the new chief of staff, retired Gen. John Kelly, in one of his first official acts in the job, two administration officials said. Mr. Kelly previously

ran the Homeland Security Department.

Mr. Kelly urged Mr. Scaramucci to resign during a one-on-one meeting in his new office shortly after being sworn-in at a Monday morning White House ceremony, the officials said. Mr. Scaramucci's removal was designed to better organize a White House that has been riven by competing factions, they said.

The president is "tired of the chaos and the confusion" in the West Wing, said Newt Gingrich, the former House speaker who advises the president. He said the president has been ruminating about the chief-of-staff change for weeks, and is prepared to empower Mr. Kelly in a way that his predecessor, Reince Priebus, wasn't. Mr. Priebus left the position last week.

"Trump, of course, reserves the right to cause chaos himself, but he likes an orderly system," Mr. Gingrich said. "That's how his golf courses work: He thinks the cooks should be cooking, the caddies should be caddying. But that doesn't restrict him."

Mr. Trump has told Mr. Kelly that all White House officials—including advisers such as chief strategist Steve Bannon and family members such as son-in-law Jared Kushner—will report directly to the chief of staff, said press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders at Monday's news briefing.

Yet Mr. Kelly's authority may also face limits. Mr. Trump's communicating over Twitter, at times on issues far removed from the White House's top legislative priorities or stated agenda, has

proven difficult for previous senior staff members to influence or curb. And the White House is populated by two members of the president's family—Mr. Kushner and Mr. Trump's daughter Ivanka, a White House adviser—which could complicate the hierarchy, even if they technically report to the chief of staff, according to past White House veterans.

"It's easy for a chief of staff to say to Anthony Scaramucci that you're wrong and you're gone," said Ari Fleischer, press secretary under former President George W. Bush. "When it's the president's daughter, you can say you did it wrong, but you can't say you're gone."

After Mr. Scaramucci's departure, which followed the resignation of press secretary Sean Spicer 10 days ago, the White House on

Monday sought to project an air of stability going forward. "The president has 100% confidence in all members of his staff," Ms. Sanders said. "No WH chaos!" Mr. Trump wrote in a tweet Monday morning.

The White House declined to comment on a successor for Mr. Scaramucci and didn't make Mr. Kelly available for comment.

Republicans expressed hope that Mr. Kelly will be able to impose discipline and order. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R., Utah) said the appointment of a general as chief of staff had tamped down "a lot of the screaming and shouting down there."

Mr. Scaramucci, 53 years old, is the founder of hedge-fund investing firm SkyBridge Capital and a hedge-fund conference known as SALT. Known as "The Mooch," Mr. Scaramucci previously hosted a financial TV show on Fox Business Network and had been a frequent guest advocating for Mr. Trump on cable news shows. Mr. Scaramucci, who has known the president for two decades, is a longtime Republican donor who eventually backed the Trump campaign in 2016 after previously supporting two other presidential candidates.

Mr. Scaramucci's ouster came four days after the New Yorker magazine published an expletive-filled interview with him, in which the Wall Street

financier attacked other top staffers in the White House, including Messrs. Priebus and Bannon.

Ms. Sanders said Monday that the president felt Mr. Scaramucci's comments in the interview were "inappropriate for a person in that position." She declined to answer a question about whether Mr. Trump regretted hiring him.

Mr. Scaramucci had told fellow White House officials in recent days that he knew it was a possibility that his New Yorker interview could result in him being ousted, said two people familiar with the conversation. But in a White House that has driven an unceasing news cycle for much of the past six months, with one breaking news story quickly overshadowing the last, Mr. Scaramucci told colleagues that he thought it might blow over.

Mr. Scaramucci—who had reported directly to Mr. Trump while Mr. Priebus was chief of staff—had told the president on Sunday that he wanted to report to Mr. Kelly, according to a Republican close to the White House. But Mr. Kelly felt the communications director was unable to be a "team player" and found his comments about his colleagues unbecoming, the person said.

Mr. Scaramucci asked to return to his position at the U.S. Export-Import Bank when he gave his resignation, a White House official said. But Ms. Sanders said in the

briefing that Mr. Scaramucci now holds no administration role. Mr. Scaramucci didn't return a call seeking comment.

Mr. Scaramucci's press team was given 15 minutes notice on Monday to report to the office of Ms. Sanders, who informed them of the change, said two people who attended the meeting. The communications staff of about 40 people received a similarly urgent notice earlier this month when they were told that Mr. Scaramucci was joining the communications office, and that Mr. Spicer, who resigned in protest over Mr. Scaramucci's hiring, was leaving. Ms. Sanders said Monday she was "not aware" of any changes to Mr. Spicer's status in the wake of Mr. Scaramucci's ouster.

As Ms. Sanders spoke to the press team on Monday, a few feet away from her was Mr. Spicer, said two people familiar with the meeting. Mr. Spicer has been helping with the transition and hasn't completely moved out of the office. White House counselor Kellyanne Conway and Hope Hicks, director of strategic communications, also attended the meeting and encouraged staff to stay focused on the work, one of the people said.

As news of the ouster emerged, Mr. Kelly sat in the White House's East Room for a planned Medal of Honor ceremony. The chief of staff chatted with Treasury Secretary Steven

Mnuchin ahead of the ceremony and appeared in good spirits.

Top advisers to Mr. Trump, including Mr. Kushner, were supportive of Mr. Kelly's move, according to a White House official.

Mr. Scaramucci was the administration's second official communications director. Mike Dubke, who previously held the post, resigned in May.

White House officials had spent the weekend anticipating further shuffling, as Mr. Kelly took control of an often-turbulent West Wing.

One concern that may now be alleviated: Mr. Scaramucci's vow last week to fire the entire communications office if he couldn't determine which officials were leaking to the media.

Mr. Kelly's challenge at the White House will be to convince the president to stick with a new system, Mr. Gingrich said.

"It will be interesting to see how he deals with Trump," the former speaker said. "He'll totally dominate the staff. He's already communicating that there's a new sheriff in town. He gets sworn in, goes to the cabinet meeting, and then calls into his office the first guy he's going to wipe out. Pretty good day."



UNE - New White House Chief of Staff Kelly flexes muscle on first day; Scaramucci fired

President Trump fired communications director Anthony Scaramucci on Monday at the urging of new White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly, a clear sign that the retired Marine general is being empowered to manage what has been an unwieldy West Wing operation.

Kelly demanded Scaramucci's departure after he attacked former White House chief of staff Reince Priebus in a profanity-laced interview last week that quickly became a public symbol of the vicious infighting that has helped define the first months of the administration.

Trump's willingness to dismiss Scaramucci — whom he hired just 10 days ago — was viewed by many in the West Wing as an indication that he is eager to impose order and is giving Kelly the tools to do so.

"General Kelly has the full authority to operate within the White House, and all staff will report to him," said

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

Left unclear is whether Kelly will be able to curb the president's inclination to subvert pecking orders, his tendency to encourage rivalries among his staff and his insistence on managing his own message through social media in ways that have often undermined his aides' strategic planning.

(Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

"This is a president that loves feedback and information, and he doesn't like getting it through a chain of command," said Trump friend Christopher Ruddy, the chief executive of Newsmax Media. "I don't think that's going to change."

But Kelly's arrival signals that Trump is putting his confidence in someone he perceives to have the stature and experience to be a forceful leader in a White House characterized by competing power centers.

After swearing in Kelly to his role during an Oval Office ceremony, Trump treated him to the formalities typically reserved for visiting heads of state. As the two sat shoulder to shoulder in armchairs for the benefit of cameras, Trump leaned in and effusively praised Kelly, who previously served as Trump's homeland security secretary. He later lavished more praise on him during a Cabinet meeting.

"I predict that General Kelly will go down, in terms of the position of chief of staff, one of the greatest ever," the president said. "We all know him, we respect him, admire what he's done."

Priebus was viewed inside the White House as being ineffective and having little control over other top aides, and the president had mused for months about replacing him. In one of the strongest indications that Kelly will have greater authority than his predecessor, Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump and son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner —

both of whom advocated for Kelly to be hired — have expressed their willingness to support any structural changes Kelly might make, according to a White House official. Sanders confirmed that they, too, will report to Kelly, as will all other officials.

A Kelly-led senior staff meeting Monday morning was well received, said people close to the White House who described aides as feeling optimistic that he might create stability in the West Wing.

"He's an adult and a disciplinarian," said Barry Bennett, who was a Trump campaign adviser. "He walks in with respect. I don't think people will go to war with him."

(Elyse Samuels/The Washington Post)

But Kelly is planning to bring at least one senior adviser from the Department of Homeland Security with him to the White House. There are signs that these new hires may be met with a chilly reception, two

people familiar with the matter said, raising questions about who will hold influence in a White House overloaded with aides competing for influence.

The White House has for months been dominated by warring factions, including a New York-based wing led by Ivanka Trump and Kushner, establishment Republicans, and Trump-allied conservatives inside and outside the administration, among them chief strategist Stephen K. Bannon.

Ivanka Trump and Kushner were instrumental in bringing Scaramucci into the White House in large part to oust Priebus, who led the establishment wing. After Scaramucci's explosive interview with the New Yorker, in which he angrily accused Priebus in vulgar terms of leaking to the media, they soured on him and were supportive of Kelly's efforts to oust him.

Over the weekend, Kelly told associates that he was dismayed by Scaramucci's interview and found it abhorrent and embarrassing for the president. Removing him from the communications post is part of an effort to change the culture of the White House and to signal to staff members that their comments reflect on the president.

"This was the president showing General Kelly that he's in charge and he has the ball and this has fingerprints of a clear sign that people need to fall in line," said

Blain Rethmeier, who helped Kelly with his confirmation process earlier this year after he was nominated to lead the Homeland Security Department. "One thing you'll see is a new level of discipline and respect restored."

The move comes as the White House is trying to jump-start the president's stagnant agenda and focus lawmakers and supporters on passing tax cuts. Earlier Monday, three top administration officials, National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and legislative director Marc Short, each said they planned to press aggressively for the tax plan, which Trump considers a centerpiece of his domestic agenda.

Shortly after Kelly was sworn in, Trump presided over a Cabinet meeting in which Cohn said the White House is focused primarily on how to push the tax overhaul through Congress. Meanwhile, Short called on conservatives to pressure Senate Democrats in competitive states such as Indiana and North Dakota to support their plan. Mnuchin said the White House would be willing to jettison numerous unspecified tax breaks to make up for some of the revenue the government would lose by lowering tax rates.

While the administration has not been able to move forward on priorities such as tax reform, overhauling the health-care system

and spending on infrastructure projects, Trump's tenure has been dominated by investigations of Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election and whether any members of his campaign colluded with Moscow.

The president and top aides have blamed the White House communications operation for not doing a better job of pushing back against the Russia story and promoting his agenda — a situation Trump has often made more difficult with his statements on Twitter.

No other post in the White House has experienced as much upheaval as the communications director job. It was first given to Jason Miller, a Trump campaign aide who stepped down during the transition. It was then given to Republican operative Michael Dubke, who resigned in May. In the intervening weeks, Sean Spicer had taken on those responsibilities in addition to his role as press secretary until Scaramucci was named to the position.

Scaramucci's tenure led to upheaval in the West Wing from the start, with Spicer resigning rather than working with the New York financier. Within days of entering the White House, Scaramucci threatened to stop White House leaks by firing "everyone" in the press office until the unauthorized disclosures ended.

Quickly, however, his feud with Priebus became his main focus.

Scaramucci had at one point described their relationship as being like "brothers." Later, he clarified that they were like Cain and Abel, two biblical brothers whose tumultuous relationship ended in tragedy. Cain murdered Abel, and was punished by God and condemned to a life of wandering.

When the New Yorker published Scaramucci's profane tirade against Priebus and vulgar criticism of Bannon, he found himself on the defensive.

But it was Priebus who was let go Friday, making it look as though Scaramucci had won their power struggle. It was a short-lived victory.

On Monday, Sanders said Trump thinks Scaramucci's comments last week went too far.

"The president certainly felt that Anthony's comments were inappropriate for a person in that position," she said.

Trump was eager on Monday to move beyond the criticism that his six months in office have been marked by tumult and dysfunction.

Early in the day, he tweeted that there is no "chaos" in his White House.

Late in the evening as the dust settled on the latest staff turnover, he tweeted: "A great day at the White House!"

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Editorial : Kelly Sends a Message - WSJ

The Editorial Board

The big questions about new White House chief of staff John Kelly are whether he can impose discipline on a chaotic staff, and whether President Trump will listen to him. After one day on the job, Mr. Kelly appears to be 2-0.

Mr. Trump swore in his new staff chief Monday morning and within hours Anthony Scaramucci was out as White House communications director. Sources said Mr. Kelly had

requested that Mr. Scaramucci depart and that Mr. Trump assented.

The Mooch's dismissal is certainly a tone setter, and not merely because he was on the job for only 10 days. A New York brawler who made a fortune in finance, Mr. Scaramucci had advertised himself as someone who understood Mr. Trump's authentic political voice and could fire anyone he wanted to. He had bragged that he reported directly to the President, not to previous chief of staff Reince Priebus. And last

week he gave a profanity-laced interview to a writer for The New Yorker denouncing Mr. Priebus and White House aide Stephen Bannon.

By firing Mr. Scaramucci, Mr. Kelly in a stroke demonstrated that he is already in charge and has the President's support, that aides who want to see Mr. Trump need to work through Mr. Kelly, and that no one should trash their colleagues in public or freelance without permission from the top. Not a bad first day.

With Mr. Trump, it's possible—perhaps likely—that this will be a fleeting moment of organizational discipline. The President has shown in the past that he can listen to advice for a few hours, sometimes even a few days, but inevitably he feels too confined by political normalcy and breaks free with a Twitter barrage or interview tirade. Or maybe, as a former four-star general, Mr. Kelly is the rare person outside his family whom Mr. Trump will heed.

The Washington Post

Podesta : The best advice I could have given to John Kelly: Don't do it!

By John Podesta

As a former White House chief of staff, the best advice I could have given Gen. John F. Kelly has been overtaken by events: Don't take the job.

Kelly, who has rendered extraordinary service and sacrifice to the nation, just signed up for what may truly be an impossible mission: bringing discipline, order and

strategic focus to the chaos that is the Trump White House.

To have any chance of succeeding, he will have to accomplish three extraordinary tasks, all at odds with President Trump's instincts.

First, discipline. There's no doubt the decision to replace Reince Priebus with Kelly was based on the hope that a former four-star Marine general could get this menagerie in

line. You don't have to compare the Trump White House to no-drama Obama or the buttoned-down Bush operations to know there is simply no precedent in modern history for the current White House culture of factionalism, infighting and lack of respect among senior staff members. Of course, most of Trump's team are simply modeling their behavior on that of the boss. His demeaning treatment of Priebus

and Attorney General Jeff Sessions signals that there are no boundaries in Trumpland, leading to the unprofessional actions of now-former communications director Anthony Scaramucci. Indeed, press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders informed the public that the president "encourages" such behavior.

Kelly is walking into a White House that looks more like a cock fight than an episode of "The West Wing." (See Mooch, you can use that word without being profane.) The White House culture will have to be shaken to its core. Kelly must be able to fire anyone at will, including to enforce a no-tolerance policy for behavior unbecoming a senior government official. Scaramucci's departure Monday is a good start, but Kelly will have to keep a tight rein on a White House staff that is used to few boundaries. And if there is going to be an exception for Trump's relatives, Kelly should get an explicit commitment that even Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump report through him — no end arounds.

The most difficult discipline problem for Kelly, though, will not be the staff but Trump himself. Early signs are not auspicious. The day after appointing Kelly, Trump ranted on Twitter against Senate Republicans

for failure to pass their horrific health-care bill, which would have denied care to millions of Americans and raised costs for millions more. I have no doubt that Kelly, unlike Priebus, can say no to power, but whether power will listen is another matter.

Kelly's second task will be to restore strategic direction to Trump's haphazard policy-making process.

In domestic affairs, that will mean reestablishing relationships with congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle. Trump's current strategy of partisan bullying has been disastrous, producing almost no significant legislation in what has generally been the most productive part of a new president's time in office. Other than rolling back some Obama regulations on behalf of special interests, the only bill of significance that has passed is the Russia sanctions bill that the White House opposed.

Kelly cannot outsource the job of establishing a working relationship with congressional leaders to Vice President Pence or his congressional liaison. The new chief of staff is known as a man of his word, and he has to use that reputation to establish a rapport and find common ground with Republicans and Democrats on issues such as infrastructure, tax reform and, yes, even a bipartisan approach to improving the Affordable Care Act.

In international affairs, he has to help national security adviser H.R. McMaster and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis focus on the clear priorities of Russia, the Middle East and North Korea. With respect to the last, he might start by asking why the White House has not even nominated an ambassador to South Korea or filled any of the senior regional posts for Asia at State or Defense.

Kelly's third task might be the hardest.

He has to protect the integrity and independence of the Justice Department and special counsel Robert S. Mueller III's investigation from constant interference by the president and the White House. He has to be resolute in defending our constitutional norms and the rule of law. While it may not endear him to the president, Kelly will actually be helping Trump stay out of even more trouble.

I began by noting that Kelly may have embarked on mission impossible, but the good news is that he does have a strong hand to play. The truth is that the president needs Kelly more than Kelly needs him. Trump simply cannot afford to have Kelly walk without disastrous consequences. The new chief of staff should use that power to restore discipline and dignity to a White House sorely in need of both.

POLITICO Kelly seizes control of the chaotic West Wing

John Kelly and Reince Priebus had a joint — and brief — meeting with senior staff on Kelly's first day in charge to talk about the changes afoot in the West Wing.

By Monday afternoon, Kelly was meeting with staff again, this time without Priebus. Kelly assembled senior aides in his office and laid down his rules of the road: More accountability on how jobs are done. More limitations on access to the Oval Office. More structure. Better briefings and information for the president. A White House staff where everyone reports to Kelly.

Almost the first thing White House chief of staff Kelly did after being sworn in Monday was dismiss communications director Anthony Scaramucci, who he believed had become a distraction in the aftermath of a profanity laced-tirade to a reporter.

To both Scaramucci's ouster and the new ground rules there was no public dissent: "I think people get it and he said he had authority from the president," one person with direct knowledge of the conversations said.

Internally, people saw Scaramucci's firing as a good thing, several West Wing aides said.

The new ground rules and the decision to cut Scaramucci loose made clear that Kelly, a retired Marine Corps general, is serious about taking control of President Donald Trump's notoriously unregimented West Wing. During his first meetings at the White House on Monday, Kelly informed

aides that they all report to him, said one senior White House official. "No doubt who is in charge," the official said.

Kelly's first day established a sharp contrast with his predecessor, Priebus, who was frequently undermined by colleagues with direct access to the president. In interviews, a half-dozen White House officials described Kelly's quick moves to assert and consolidate control, even as the president himself tweeted, "No WH chaos!"

"Kelly is already changing the culture here," one White House aide said.

White House officials said Kelly is planning to lock down the Oval Office, restricting the number of aides and outside visitors who can wander in. One aide said Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump and son-in-law Jared Kushner have agreed to follow Kelly's rules when it comes to visiting the Oval and sharing information with the president. "They are going to actually report to him," the aide said.

"Old habits die hard, but I'm confident he can kill them," one person close to Kelly said of the uphill battle he faces in monitoring access to the president.

Kelly has told associates that he believes it's his responsibility to "straighten this out" — and that he wouldn't have taken the chief of staff job if he hadn't received the authority to make tough decisions, according to an outside adviser to the White House who has spoken directly to Kelly.

Press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters Monday that all White House staff would report to Kelly.

Those who know Kelly say his decision to oust Scaramucci fits with his track record of removing subordinates whom he believes are standing in the way of his mission.

"It's not surprising to me that he would can someone," said Mieke Eoyang, vice president at Third Way's National Security Program, who has known Kelly for about 20 years.

Scaramucci was named to the communications director role just 10 days ago, a move that prompted the resignation of Sanders' predecessor, Sean Spicer.

"Mr. Scaramucci felt it was best to give Chief of Staff John Kelly a clean slate and the ability to build his own team," Sanders said in a statement. "We wish him all the best."

Aides said Kelly has already accepted that he will have little control over one of the biggest impediments to order in the White House: Trump's tweeting.

"He, within 24 hours, can pull them back into the same quagmire," said former Nixon White House Counsel John Dean.

"The whole question is how Trump treats this. If he sees this as a reset, it's a reset. If it's a new crew to put blame on, then we'll know that soon too," Dean added.

Kelly, who previously served as Trump's secretary of Homeland

Security, inherits a West Wing engulfed by a series of federal and congressional probes into Russian meddling in the 2016 election. Trump had repeatedly complained on Twitter that the FBI probe overseen by special counsel Robert Mueller is a "witch hunt" that has engulfed his administration and put his own family members into the direct line of the investigation.

The president has also publicly slammed his attorney general, Jeff Sessions, over his recusal from the Russia case, calling him "beleaguered."

Former White House aides said other big chief of staff shakeups have been potent shots in the arm to propel a presidency forward. President Barack Obama's final chief of staff, Denis McDonough, lasted the entire second term and was seen as helping advance a series of major policy initiatives without suffering a major scandal, all while working the entire time with a Republican-controlled Congress.

Leon Panetta helped bring discipline to an unruly first term of the Clinton administration and guided the Democrat through his reelection bid. Howard Baker's arrival in early 1987 was widely seen as giving Ronald Reagan a big boost after more than a year mired in the Iran-Contra scandal.

But the staff turnover at the Trump White House won't stop the drip-drip of media coverage surrounding the Russia investigation, said former George W. Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer.

"What hurts the White House more is the feeding frenzy," he said.

Trump made it clear Monday that he has high expectations for Kelly, who has emerged as a favorite member of his administration.

The president used a string of choreographed appearances before the press on Monday to lavish praise on Kelly, marveling at his brief but "miraculous" tenure as Homeland Security secretary, a role he performed with "very little controversy."

"He will do a spectacular job, I have no doubt, as chief of staff," Trump gushed. "What he's done in terms of Homeland Security is record-shattering."

Even before he was sworn in, Kelly had emerged as a prized member of Trump's team. Aides said the president, long enamored with generals, believes Kelly was his most effective Cabinet secretary.

Kelly was thrust into the spotlight early in the administration by Trump's January executive order banning travel from multiple Muslim-majority countries, an order that temporarily created chaos at airports across the country.

People close to Kelly said he'll likely take a keen interest in foreign policy issues. And while some White House aides have raised concerns about his relative lack of experience on the Hill, others noted that he has built strong relationships with members of Congress of both parties when he served as the Marine's liaison to Capitol Hill.

Kelly has spoken twice since Sunday with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, according to a McConnell spokesman. He's also connected with House Speaker Paul Ryan, a close friend and ally of Priebus, whose ouster was announced Friday by Trump via Twitter alongside Kelly's appointment.

"I think it's an amazingly good thing the president has turned to the general," said Utah Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch. He added that Kelly's presence might cut down on "a lot of the screaming and shouting down there."

It remains unclear how involved Kelly will be in shaping Trump's communications strategy. But the decision to remove Scaramucci leaves a gaping hole at the top of the White House press office — and it sends a message that Kelly has little tolerance for showboats.

Trump has suggested that he wants to have more off-the-record time with journalists. There's a feeling among some West Wing aides that if the press engaged with Trump more they would see his point of view. But off-the-record chats could further complicate Kelly's job, especially if the president's off-color comments go public.

While White House chief strategist Steve Bannon became an ally of Priebus, he's made it known that he's happy to see Kelly elevated to chief of staff rather than Gary Cohn, director of the National Economic Council.

Bannon feared Cohn could be primed for the post if Priebus was ousted, according to a White House aide and a Bannon ally. The ally said Bannon believes that installing Kelly was a loss for the "White House Democrats," meaning Cohn, Kushner and Ivanka Trump, because it meant that Cohn was not lined up for the job.

Still, Kushner and Ivanka Trump are said to be supportive of naming Kelly as chief of staff. "Looking forward to serving alongside John Kelly as we work for the American people," Ivanka Trump wrote Monday afternoon on Twitter. "General Kelly is a true American hero."



Gerow : OPINION | John Kelly is the right man to get Trump's house in order

Charlie

Gerow, opinion contributor

There aren't many four-star generals. There are fewer than 50 across all the services. The Marine Corps has just two. Throughout our history, when distinguished general officers ventured into the world of politics, it was at the highest level — president of the United States.

We've had a lot of generals who became president. Dwight Eisenhower was the last (and he actually had five stars). But only two four-star generals have served as White House chief of staff — Alexander Haig and John Kelly, who on Monday was sworn in to the post. About the time Kelly was coming through the front door, Anthony Scaramucci was going out the back, a sign the general had won his first battle.

Holding the second most powerful office in the White House is pivotal but not necessarily transformational. As Robert Strauss once told a previous chief executive, "There's only one job in this town worth having, Mr. President, and you've already got it." Ultimately, it's the president who determines the course of any administration.

Taking stage after a bad act is usually an advantage. Last week may have been the worst for the new administration. From the Boy Scouts speech, to transgenders in the military, to the Ryan Lizza

interview, to the vote on a "skinny repeal" of ObamaCare, things didn't go exactly as hoped. The week culminated in the resignation of Reince Priebus, marking the shortest tenure of any White House chief of staff.

Enter John Kelly. Unlike Gen. Haig, who loved politics and even ran for president himself — although he never came up with a theme better than "shake a leg for Haig" — Gen. Kelly has said he has no time for this level of "toxic politics."

Politics is at the core of the job he's undertaken. How well he dilutes the level of toxicity may well be the measure of his success. Kelly takes his new post after a tumultuous week, even by Trump administration standards. The sharp elbows that exist in any White House have come with razor blades attached in recent days.

Restoring discipline — ensuring consistent messages, controlling the calendar and access to the Oval Office, and curbing West Wing infighting — will be job one for the new chief of staff.

Those are no easy tasks, but Kelly is ideally equipped for the challenge. He brings some vital assets. First, he's liked and respected by the president. Trump loves high-ranking military brass, but Kelly stands out within that group.

Trump likes loyalty and strength. Kelly personifies both. He's a

Marine and a warrior. Alexander Haig got most of his stars inside the political world. John Kelly came with his.

His physical stature and Marine bearing will be important, not-to-be-underestimated assets in bringing a chaotic White House into order. He's not going to flinch when confronted nor blink when under pressure. He'll never appear weak. It's simply not in his DNA.

Establishing command and control is in his wheelhouse. He got high marks for his tenure at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Now comes the much more daunting challenge of taking it to the highest levels of the executive branch.

Reversing the impression that the White House spins out of control will be the first test of Kelly's mettle and leadership skills. He'll have to inspire and motivate the senior staff to perform at levels necessary for a successful administration. He will have to demand a team that focuses on the mission and not on self. That will go a long way to curbing the flow of leaks, most of which are motivated by self interest.

Restoring professionalism and a team concept will require a reporting structure that funnels through him. Having open access to the Oval Office and a president who often responds to the last thing he's heard is an invitation to disaster. Look for Kelly to take control of that access as well as the calendar.

Kelly will have to be a true gatekeeper, controlling both the flow into the Oval Office and out of the White House. That discipline, something a Marine Corps general knows a thing or two about, will produce a unified message and unified team.

Replacing dissension with cooperation doesn't mean there won't be tensions. Tensions are the daily reflection of working the levers of power. Kelly doesn't need to make the eagles fly in formation. He needs to keep them from devouring each other. He should be able to do much of that by the sheer strength of his personality.

The agenda must now come first. There will be more gaming out of strategies rather than instinctive action and freewheeling. An improved decision-making style will result in message cohesion and consistency. Kelly must help set the tone, develop the message and keep the entire team on that message.

All of this is a cultural shift. It will take some time. It's going to be a process, not an event. There's an opportunity for a fusion of establishment Republicans, movement conservatives and populist outsiders who fueled the Trump victory. If Kelly can help bring those elements together, he'll be lauded as a hero.

The elevation of John Kelly allows a fresh start for an administration just six months old. Restoring the order

and discipline necessary to carry out the Trump agenda are well within Kelly's proven abilities. But he'll need to have the full support

and imprimatur of the man with the most important job.

Without the president giving him full authority to restore discipline, add

structure and enhance attitude, Kelly won't be successful. With the full support of the boss, he'll be able aggressively move the agenda and be fearless in the face of opposition.

I used to think Paul Ryan had the toughest job in D.C. It looks like John Kelly just took the title.



The Downsides of John Kelly's Ascension

Eliot A. Cohen

Donald Trump is not much of a man. He feels sorry for himself, he whines, he gropes women; he bullies the weak. He brags and he lies. As a young man, this self-proclaimed athlete collected five draft deferments rather than wear his country's uniform. He doesn't even work out. The motto emblazoned on Trump's bogus coat of arms should probably be "faithless," which makes it odd that he has picked as his chief of staff a general steeled in a service whose motto is "ever faithful." (The Trump coat of arms was reportedly lifted from another family, with the motto "integrity" replaced—inevitably—by "Trump.")

John Kelly, retired Marine four-star and new White House chief of staff, has been throughout his career everything Trump is not: He has endured more than Trump could imagine, and has displayed virtues that Trump may not understand and certainly has not exhibited, among them candor, courage, and discipline. Which is why some observers have welcomed Kelly's hiring as evidence that perhaps the president is learning, that maybe now we will have a disciplined White House that will focus on the business of public policy. Maybe the early morning tweets will diminish or even stop.

Trump's pick of Kelly is probably better understood in a broader and darker context. That includes a speech that he gave the same day to New York's Suffolk County Police Department calling on cops to bang suspects' heads into squad cars; the brusque, uncoordinated dismissal of transgender service personnel by presidential tweet; a speech a week earlier at the commissioning of USS *Gerald R. Ford* urging

sailors to lobby their representatives; a harangue to 30,000 Boy Scouts that included a rant about loyalty, and that earned him an astonishing rebuke from the head of the Boy Scouts of America; and a longer history of toying around the edge of inciting violence, to include the assassination of his opponent in the last election.

As the coils of the Russia investigation grow tighter, as his failures in Congress mount, Trump reaches for what he knows—demagoguery of the rawest sort. He reaches as well for what he thinks of as his base, which includes (he believes) the military, many of whose leaders are actually quietly appalled by what he represents. He has picked Kelly not because of his political or administrative skills but because he thinks of him as a "killer"—a term of praise in his lexicon, which is why he likes referring to his secretary of defense as "Mad Dog" Mattis, a nickname the former general rejects. Kelly will not organize Goon Squads for Trump, but the president would probably not mind if he did. More to the point, Kelly's selection, and that of a foul-mouthed financier from New York as Trump's communications director, tells us not that Trump is planning on moderating his behavior, but rather on going to the mattresses. He just may have picked the wrong guy for that mission, that's all.

Kelly's decision to take the job lends itself to multiple explanations. It may be an irresistible call to duty by someone who thinks of the president mainly as commander-in-chief; it may be an act of deep, quiet patriotism by someone who intends to shield the country from Trump's lawless worst; it may reflect personal ambition, or mere hankering for as difficult a management challenge as one could imagine; or it may reflect a

sneaking admiration for the boorish businessman who has successfully slapped around the politicians of left and right that many officers, and Marines in particular, despise as cowardly and corrupt. Kelly once handed a ceremonial saber to the President while unfunny suggesting that he use it on the press. In April, he said the following: "If lawmakers do not like the laws they've passed and we are charged to enforce, then they should have the courage and skill to change the laws. Otherwise they should shut up and support the men and women on the front lines." A less supine Congress might have noticed the discourtesy and reacted sharply to being told to "shut up."

His occasionally contemptuous attitude towards the press and Congress, though, is only one reason why it is highly unlikely that Kelly will succeed. Trump will remain Trump, and the various denizens of the White House are unlikely to treat Kelly with much more deference than they treat one another. He will discover that he is no longer a general, or even a cabinet secretary, but a political functionary—neither more nor less.

There was a reason why he spent 42 years on active duty rather than run for mayor of Boston. He probably already knows, but if not he will soon learn, that he will be as dispensable as his predecessor, that Trump hates any of his subordinates being too powerful or too visible. And worst of all, he will soon find himself wrestling with the moral corruption that being close to this man entails. You cannot work directly for Trump while adhering to a code of honesty, integrity, and lawfulness. Sooner or later Kelly will have to defend the White House's jabber about "fake news," "alternative facts," and "witch hunts." He will have to ascribe to Trump virtues that he does not

possess, and deny the moral lapses and quite possibly the crimes that he has committed.

There is one further reason to find this appointment depressing. It contributes to the continuing decay of American civil-military relations. Those of us who were relieved to see James Mattis as secretary of defense, H. R. McMaster as national-security adviser, and Kelly himself as secretary of Homeland Security, felt that way partly out of appreciation for the virtues of all three men, but also, very largely, out of relief that their sanity might contain their boss's craziness. But it is inappropriate to have so many generals in policy-making positions; it is profoundly wrong to have a president regard the military as a constituency, and it is corrupting to have the Republican Party, such as it is, act as though generals have if not a monopoly then at least dominant market share in the qualities of executive ability and patriotism. It is unwise to have higher-level positions in the hands of officials who have openly expressed disdain for Congress—now a dangerously weak branch of government.

Trump, who has no idea how many articles there are in the Constitution, neither knows nor cares about any of the niceties of civil-military relations. To their credit, Kelly, Mattis, and McMaster have thought long and hard about these issues. But like any of us they have their individual limitations, and like any of us, their characters can be eroded by the whirlpool of moral and political corruption that is Donald Trump. The Marines live by a hard code, and John Kelly has endured tests of character more difficult than most of us can conceive. But his hardest tests lie ahead, and neither he nor anyone else can be sure that he will pass them.

POLITICO Kelly's military approach to the media

By Edward-Isaac Dover

"Listen, I respect them enormously," John Kelly once told his transition "Sherpa," Blain Rethmeier about his feelings towards the press, Rethmeier recalled in an interview. | Wilfredo Lee/AP Photo

The new chief of staff respects the press but will defer to his superior, Donald Trump.

When it comes to the media, new White House chief of staff John Kelly is a military man at heart, according to those who know him and have dealt with him in the past.

Operating out of the Pentagon, the former Marine Corps general and

head of the U.S. Southern Command learned to respect members of the press but felt burned when they didn't cover the news of what was under his command — including Guantanamo Bay — in what he considered a fair way.

His new challenge, some of those people say, is that the political writers in the White House are a

different breed than their Pentagon counterparts, who tend to have deep groundings in defense policy. And Kelly's value system may be strained in his new job — both by the press corps and the boss he will serve.

To some extent, his brief tenure as Homeland Security secretary was a period of adjustment to dealing with a more politically oriented media, as

he was on the front line defending some of President Donald Trump's more controversial moves like the travel ban and crackdown on illegal immigration.

"In his time at DHS, he's been a bit frustrated with the press coverage in some aspects but he doesn't think there should be less of it," explained David Lapan, his DHS spokesperson who has worked with Kelly for more than 10 years. "His concern was making sure it was accurate."

Kelly's preference for straight shooting was reflected in his first major decision as chief of staff, pushing out Trump's newly minted communications director, Anthony Scaramucci. The Mooch, as he was nicknamed, was widely viewed as the kind of fast-talking, political-oriented communicator that Kelly distrusts. In his experience with the Marines, Kelly came from a culture in which if "we just tell the truth, that's enough," Lapan said.

To the extent that he's able, Kelly will try to develop more of a transactional, two-way approach to media relations, according to those who've dealt with him over the years. He'll respect them, if they respect him.

"Listen, I respect them enormously," Kelly once told his transition "Sherpa," Blain Rethmeier, Rethmeier recalled in an interview.

"I would characterize [Kelly's feelings] as a deep respect for the media and understanding there is an important job for them to do, and in order for them to do it, it takes that trust," Rethmeier said.

While all of his former colleagues are sure about Kelly's personal respect for the press, they aren't as sure about how he would handle a president who routinely calls outlets "fake news," has trafficked in conspiracy theories, tweets out videos of himself literally beating up the logo of a news organization, and openly mused about opening up libel laws.

Despite his appreciation of the role of the media, Kelly is, at heart, a military man who respects the chain of command, and thus Trump's role as commander in chief, those who know him say.

Should Kelly be presented with a situation in which Trump wishes to ban an outlet from the White House, Kelly would likely carry out the president's directive, Lapan said.

"I think he would push back against banning a reporter from the briefing room, but he also recognizes that ultimately the president is the decision-maker and there is a time to have internal discussions and disagreements," Lapan said. "But at the end of the day ... Gen. Kelly is the one to carry out those orders and directions, but he certainly will have a say."

Before taking his DHS post, Kelly worked with two secretaries of defense, Robert Gates and Leon Panetta, who were known for being open with the press. It was from them, both reporters and those who worked alongside him say, that Kelly developed his communication strategies.

"Gates and Panetta were heavily influential in how he thinks about the media," said Washington Post

reporter Greg Jaffe, who has covered Kelly extensively. "It made him understand the importance of doing [media] and how to be strategic about it."

Gates and Panetta valued their relationships with individual reporters and saw them as crucial to advancing their agendas, a lesson Kelly has taken to heart, said Geoff Morrell, former Pentagon press secretary in the Obama administration.

"He's had excellent role models in media engagement and seen firsthand the benefits of having a good working relationship with reporters. He knows that if you treat them as professionals and with respect that they will give you and your agenda a fairer shake," Morrell said.

At the Pentagon, Kelly was known to have long off-the-record chats with reporters while traveling with the secretaries, and built personal relationships with reporters including ABC's Martha Raddatz, The Wall Street Journal's Julian Barnes and The New York Times' Thom Shanker, to the point where they would call Kelly directly even after he became DHS secretary, said Lapan.

Unlike the Pentagon, White House or State Department, DHS does not have a dedicated press corps. The agency is covered by a hodgepodge of reporters whose beats involve defense, immigration and transportation. But Kelly did try to improve relations, directing his staff to engage more with the press and instituting a new weekly news briefing, which reporters said they found helpful.

But Kelly ultimately sees the relationship with the media as a two-way street. He tries to be transparent and forthcoming those who have worked with him said, but he gets angry if he feels burned, colleagues say.

One place where he felt the coverage to be unfair was the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, which he oversaw as head of the U.S. Southern Command, his former colleagues say. Kelly felt he gave journalists access to the facility and wanted to show that the facility was being run in accordance with the law. But coverage trended toward the negative.

"Where the press got sideways with him is he would trust them, give them access, and then be burned by it," Rethmeier said.

One thing Kelly has little patience for is leaks — but mainly of the classified nature.

"I believe when you leak the kind of information that seems to be routinely leaked — high, high level of classification ... I think it's darn close to treason," Kelly told NBC's "Meet the Press" in May.

But Lapan put it this way: "When he's talking about treason, he's talking about those types of leaks, not the personal score settling, the rumors, those types of leaks. I'd also say as someone who has operated in and around Washington for a long time, he understands that's just the nature and there will always be leaks. You're not going to stop leaks but you should focus your attention on the ones that are serious and violate the law."



O'Brien : Don't Succumb to Crazy White House Fatigue

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Just 240 or so hours ago, Anthony Scaramucci, absent relevant experience and credentials, became the White House communications director. It was a palace coup that also forced the departures of press secretary Sean Spicer and chief of staff Reince Priebus from the administration of President Donald Trump, and appeared to leave Steve Bannon's future in doubt as the presidency's Dark Lord.

On Monday, Trump and his new chief of staff, John Kelly, showed Scaramucci the door, just days after Mooch phoned the New Yorker's Ryan Lizza and offered him a raunchy, self-aggrandizing assessment of his White House goals and disdain for anyone who might stand in his way. Scaramucci,

a communications director who was bad at communications, deployed the same foul, brawny language that his boss has been specializing in for decades. But Moochismo made POTUS -- already suffering through the bungling of Obamacare repeal and other setbacks -- look bad.

So out went Scaramucci.

This is sad. Mooch clearly liked his new job:

While Scaramucci's tenure only lasted an eye-blink, he certainly won't be the last member of Team Trump who loses access to Air Force One. Trump's presidency, like his business career, has been marked by unpredictability, lax management, wasted time and energy, backroom skulduggery, and a cult of personality so

radioactive that it burns most of whatever's exposed to it.

The Trump soap opera isn't episodic, either. Chaos and uncertainty are what Trump thrives on and what he relishes. So the latest round of White House crazy shouldn't raise questions like "Is this as bad as it gets?" or "Will the Trump presidency finally turn a corner?" This past week, like the weeks before it and the weeks to come, is what it will always be like.

All of this poses a challenge to Trump supporters and critics, not to mention the rest of us, because the permanent chaos makes it so easy to forget that the presidency isn't supposed to be a parade of carnival sideshows. A similar mental hurdle exists around the myriad financial and business conflicts that engulf the White House. Those conflicts are so wide-ranging, flagrant and

unchecked that it would be easy for Trump-watchers to succumb to scandal fatigue as a psychological survival strategy.

When it comes to the internecine warfare at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, each changing of the White House guard makes it tempting to latch on to the idea that the adults have, at last, taken charge.

Scaramucci gave a generally lauded first press conference 10 days ago, air kisses to reporters and all, but then, boom! And Kelly comes into his new role as Trump's chief of staff as a well-regarded former general with the disciplinary skills seemingly needed to lasso the whirlwind. But as my Bloomberg View colleague Albert R. Hunt has noted, "It's doubtful that all the warring White House factions, working for a president with few

core beliefs, lend themselves to a chain-of-command structure."

Chaos and collapse can also play out over long stretches in Trumplandia. Trump ran a promising and lucrative casino business into the ground over a numbingly long period of about 25 years, extracting piles of money and perks for himself. Along the way, he left investors, vendors, employees --

and Atlantic City, New Jersey -- in the lurch. Trump also cycled through a long line of casino executives, managers and partners, none of whom altered his modus operandi: extraction.

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So the Anthony Scaramuccis, Roger Stones, Marc Kasowitzes, Kellyanne Conways, Sean Spicers, Reince Preibuses, Corey Lewandowskis, Paul Manafort and Stephen Millers of the world will come and go, taking turns sharing the stage with the White House's only star, and doing their best to support his guerrilla sensibility. But they, like all Trump advisers, are interchangeable, apt to be

jettisoned if they forget to put the boss first -- or to kid themselves that his presidency is about anything other than extraction.

A rotating cast of advisers means that Trump will always set the tone, pace and agenda of his administration. So buckle up, America, because the president is just getting started.

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL**

Editorial : Government Opioid Abuse - WSJ

The Editorial Board

Opioid abuse ranks among the nation's biggest public health challenges with drug overdoses now the leading cause of death among Americans under the age of 50. While the causes are complex and multiple, politicians and their trial lawyer friends aren't letting the crisis go to waste.

More than 20 state and local governments including Ohio, Missouri, Mississippi and nine counties in New York have sued prescription opioid manufacturers for fraud and deceptive marketing, among other supposed offenses. Ohio GOP Attorney General Mike DeWine's lawsuit against Purdue, Janssen, Teva, Endo and Allergan has set a template for other states that are coordinating litigation.

Governments are farming out the legal work to trial attorneys who front the bills in return for a share—typically 20%—of the reward. States used this contingency-fee model to squeeze \$206 billion from tobacco companies in the 1990s, and the ringleader of that effort, former Mississippi Attorney General Mike Moore, is assisting with the opioid raids.

The lawsuits rely on the same sources—and suffer from the same flaws. Namely, they don't specify instances in which doctors relied on alleged misrepresentations to improperly

prescribe an opioid medication that led to a particular injury. A federal judge last year dismissed most of Chicago's claims because the city "failed to identify the prescribers who were exposed to defendants' [alleged] misrepresentations as the same prescribers who prescribed defendants' drugs and thereby caused the City to incur costs."

Plaintiffs contend that pharmaceutical companies fraudulently market opioids for chronic pain and that long-term use encourages dependency. Yet the Food and Drug Administration approves the labeling and warnings for prescription opioids. Lawyers and politicians are trying to substitute their medical judgment for that of regulators and physicians.

In 2015 a California state judge stayed Orange County's lawsuit after finding it "could lead to inconsistencies with the FDA's findings, inconsistencies among the States, a lack of uniformity, and a potential chilling effect on the prescription of these drugs for those who need them most." Meanwhile, state plaintiffs continue to reimburse opioid prescriptions, which makes them co-conspirators with Big Pharma.

Ohio claims that prescription opioids are a gateway to street drugs and that their deceptive marketing has "resulted in the explosion in heroin use." Yet 2.3 million patients in Ohio were prescribed painkillers last year—more than 10 times the number of opioid addicts. The vast

majority of patients who take prescription painkillers don't get hooked on heroin. A New England Journal of Medicine study last year found that fewer than 4% of people who had used prescribed painkillers for non-medical reasons used heroin sometime in the following five years.

Painkillers can encourage dependency, and physicians need to carefully monitor patients. But the bigger problem, as the Ohio lawsuit evinces, is fraud in the delivery system. "Despite strict federal regulation of prescription drugs, local law enforcement agencies are faced with increasing diversion from legitimate sources for illicit purposes, doctor shopping, forged prescriptions, falsified pharmacy records, and employees who steal from their place of employment," the lawsuit notes.

In 2015, 1,663,614 opioid pills—21.3 per capita—were dispensed in Ross County, Ohio. A fraction of physicians account for a disproportionate share of opioid prescriptions, and addicts forum shop like trial attorneys. Prescription opioids often get diverted to the black market, and drug dealers on the street often lace painkillers with illicitly manufactured opioids to create more potent, and lethal, drugs.

Nearly all states operate databases that track physicians, patients and prescriptions, but the rub is using the metadata to track criminal activity and curb abuse. Some

states such as Kentucky and Tennessee that have required doctors to consult databases prior to prescribing opioids have seen a decline in doctor shopping.

Plaintiffs are requesting billions in damages to cover the social and economic costs of opioid addiction, and Senators demanded upward of \$45 billion for treatment in return for their votes to repeal ObamaCare. Yet the ObamaCare Medicaid expansion may have inadvertently fueled the opioid epidemic by making painkillers more accessible. A recent study estimated that a quarter of Medicaid beneficiaries were prescribed opioids in 2015.

Politicians no doubt are hoping to raise money from the trial bar off the opioid lawsuits. Mr. DeWine plans to run for Governor next year, and the Democratic nominee will likely be his predecessor Richard Cordray, who has spent the last five years as a frontman for plaintiff attorneys while leading the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

State and local governments are also scrounging around to backfill their budgets, which have been strained by labor and pension costs. It may be easier to hit up Big Pharma than taxpayers, but mugging businesses won't cure politicians of their spending addictions.

**The
Washington
Post**

White House opioid commission to Trump: "Declare a national emergency" on drug overdoses

The President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis issued a preliminary report on Monday stating that its "first and most urgent recommendation" is for the president to "declare a national emergency under either the Public Health Service Act or the Stafford Act."

"With approximately 142 Americans dying every day," the report notes, "America is enduring a death toll

equal to September 11th every three weeks."

The commission, led by New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, states that the goals of such a declaration would be to "force Congress to focus on funding" and to "awaken every American to this simple fact: if this scourge has not found you or your family yet, without bold action by everyone, it soon will."

In 2015, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention figures, heroin deaths alone surpassed gun homicides for the first time. More than 33,000 people died of opioid overdose, with another 20,000 dying from other drugs. A recent federal study found that prescription painkillers are now more widely used than tobacco.

Prescription overdose deaths began to rise in the mid-2000, following aggressive marketing and

widespread prescribing of the drugs starting in the late 1990s. In response, state and federal authorities began cracking down on prescription opiate availability, introducing "abuse-deterrent" formulations, tighter prescribing guidelines and operations targeting "pill mills" that made the drugs widely available.

But in response to these interventions, many painkiller abusers appear to have switched to

illicit street drugs. As prescription painkiller deaths started to fall, heroin overdoses increased dramatically. The latest development has been the emergence of powerful synthetic opiates like fentanyl, which are sometimes mixed with heroin with fatal consequences for unsuspecting users.

In his inaugural address, President Trump cited "drugs that have stolen too many lives and robbed our country of so much unrealized potential," vowing that "this American carnage stops right here and stops right now." Trump established the opioid commission to study the issue in March, with a mandate to "study ways to combat and treat the scourge of drug abuse, addiction, and the opioid crisis."

In addition to declaring a national emergency, the commission's first report includes a number of recommendations that public health

experts and drug policy reformers have been advocating for years. They include:

- Expanding capacity for drug treatment under Medicaid;
- Increasing the use of medication-assisted treatments, like buprenorphine and suboxone, for opioid disorders;
- Encouraging the development of non-opioid pain relievers;
- Mandating that every local law enforcement officer in the nation carry naloxone, the drug that rapidly reverses opiate overdose;
- Broadening "good Samaritan" laws that shield individuals from

prosecution when they report a drug overdose to first responders or law enforcement officials.

Notably absent from the report are a number of tough-on-crime measures that Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions have repeatedly offered up as solutions to the opioid crisis, including building a wall on the Mexican border, expanding the use of mandatory minimum sentencing for drug crimes, and seizing more cash and property from individuals suspected of drug crimes.

"The interim report is mostly appropriately focused around dealing with the opioid crisis as the health issue that it is," said Grant W. Smith of the Drug Policy Alliance, a group that advocates for a more public health-centered approach to drug issues. "It offers a sharp contrast to the overall approach that the Trump administration has been

taking to escalate the war on drugs."

However, Smith had some concerns about whether an emergency declaration would expand the powers of the president and attorney general in a way that could allow abuse of law enforcement authority. He also noted that the Medicaid cuts discussed under various plans to repeal the Affordable Care Act could have devastated drug treatment availability, contrary to what the report recommends.

The commission's report repeatedly addresses the president directly and encourages him to use his bully pulpit to raise awareness of the issue. "Our country needs you, Mr. President," it concludes. "We know you care deeply about this issue. We also know that you will use the authority of your office to deal with our nation's problems."



Editorial : Declare opioid 'national emergency'

If 1,000 people in America were dying in plane crashes or terrorist attacks each week, the country would be horrified, demanding an end to the carnage.

Well, 1,000 people are dying each week of drug overdoses, driven largely by addiction to opioids.

Yet outside of pleas from victims' loved ones and addiction experts, there is no sustained, massive outcry across the nation to stamp out this scourge.

Perhaps the raging epidemic has failed to galvanize the public because the deaths don't occur as mass tragedies. They are spread across the country, a relentless stream in cities, suburbs, small towns and rural communities.

Overdose deaths — more than 52,400 in 2015 — have far outstripped the toll from guns or vehicle crashes, once the leading causes of accidental deaths. This tragedy is a health crisis that requires an all-out response by all levels of government, law enforcement, the medical establishment and the treatment community.

ANOTHER VIEW:

On Monday, a commission created by President Trump called for the president to declare a "national emergency," which would empower

federal agencies to take bold steps and cut through regulatory hurdles, pressure Congress to provide more money for the fight, and awaken more Americans to the extent of the crisis. Several public health experts made a similar recommendation to the Obama administration last year, but nothing came of it.

The commission also called for more concrete actions, including changing federal law to force licensed physician prescribers to get training on how to prescribe opioids safely. Amazingly, few get such training now.

Most of the panel's recommendations are solid and deserve to be adopted. But one excellent idea — eliminating a major barrier to using federal Medicaid funds for drug treatment at large psychiatric hospitals — runs head-on into Republican efforts to curb Medicaid spending.

Whether the president moves on this proposal will say a lot about how serious he is about solving this crisis.

Any comprehensive approach must include ways to treat those who are already addicted, and steps to prevent addiction in the first place.

Addicts are showing up in morgues, at a rate so high in some communities that coroners are running out of space. But many

victims who die have shown up previously in emergency rooms before it was too late. Most are told they need treatment and are handed a list of facilities to call the next day. Few follow up, and even when they do, effective treatment is hard to find.

A groundbreaking 2015 Yale University study found that patients given buprenorphine — an opioid replacement drug that can be taken safely under a doctor's care — in the emergency room were twice as likely (78% to 37%) to stay in treatment 30 days later compared with those who just received a referral.

Wider adoption of medication-assisted treatment has been hindered by the stigma attached to opioid addicts, who are seen as people with moral failings rather than as patients with serious medical conditions.

Medications can, of course, be subject to abuse or diversion. But evidence shows that these treatments are more successful than talk therapy alone, and they should be more widely available as part of recovery programs. Right now, only about 10% of treatment facilities provide medication-assisted treatment.

As for preventing opioid addiction, that will be largely up to federal agencies that for years made it far too easy to prescribe painkillers and

the doctors who prescribed them cavalierly. In 2012, doctors wrote 282 million prescriptions for opioid pain medication, more than enough for every adult in the USA to have a bottle of pills. Didn't anyone notice that something was terribly wrong with this huge number?

Now the country is living with the consequences of those failures. Many addicts who can no longer get opioid prescriptions legally, or find the drugs too expensive on the street, have turned to heroin, which is cheaper and widely available. Heroin overdose deaths have more than tripled since 2010.

Some dealers are lacing heroin with synthetic fentanyl and other dangerous drugs to provide a better high — combinations that are proving deadly. This is a law enforcement problem requiring a concerted effort to trace and arrest the suppliers of deadly synthetic opioids.

New approaches are urgently needed. It would not be all that difficult for the Trump administration to exceed the performance of the Obama and Bush administrations, both late to recognize this horrific crisis.

The impetus certainly exists: If today is an average day in America, drug overdoses will kill another 144 people.

A government opioid commission chaired by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has called for President Trump to declare a state of emergency in dealing with the opioid epidemic, which now kills more than 100 Americans daily.

Such a declaration, which several states have already made, "would empower your cabinet to take bold steps and would force Congress to focus on funding and empowering the executive branch even further to deal with this loss of life," the commission wrote in a report released Monday. The commission also includes Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, former Congressman Patrick Kennedy, and the Harvard Medical School psychobiology professor Bertha Madras.

The report recommended a number of other reforms to opioid treatment and overdose prevention, many of which will make it easier for addicts to get treatment.

They recommend changes to law enforcement, such as arming all police officers with naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses, and improving the detection of fentanyl at the border.

Because most heroin addicts start with prescription painkillers, they recommend improving training on painkiller prescribing for doctors and forcing state prescription-tracking programs to share their information by July 2018. (Forty-nine states have these so-called "prescription-drug monitoring programs," but not all coordinate with each other, the report notes.)

Finally, the report urges the closing of several loopholes around medication-assisted recovery

treatment for addicts. The report recommends that states be granted waivers to allow federal Medicaid funds to reimburse treatment in facilities with more than 16 beds, and that all treatment facilities offer medication-assisted treatment, such as buprenorphine. Some providers believe these drugs don't constitute true recovery or sobriety.

Regulators, they write, should fine health plans that violate mental-health parity laws, meaning they illegally restrict mental-health or addiction benefits to a greater degree than physical health benefits. Finally, the commission suggests relaxing medical privacy laws so that the families of addicted patients can get updates on their relative's medical status.

This interim report is expected to be followed with a final report in October. Before then, the commission says it will conduct "a full review of federal funding and

programs and obstacles and opportunities for treatment." Among other issues, it hopes to examine anti-drug programs aimed at kids and "satisfaction ratings" for doctors, which are considered to be a potential factor in the overprescribing of painkillers.

The commission is separate from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, though the ONDCP submits recommendations to the commission. It's not clear how much of the commission's report the White House will take up, if any. Trump established the commission through an executive order in March, but in May he proposed cutting 95 percent of the ONDCP's budget. Reducing funding for Medicaid, as several of the Republican Obamacare-repeal health bills aimed to do, would also severely affect opioid addiction treatment. Medicaid pays for about a quarter of all opioid-addiction treatment prescriptions.



Singer : On opioids, government is not the solution

War on Drugs has fueled the dangerous counterfeit opioid market: Another view

To paraphrase President Reagan, in this present opioid crisis, "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."

The never-ending War on Drugs has led to a proliferation of counterfeit opioids widely available on the black market. Oftentimes, these drugs are laced with more dangerous and powerful opioids such as fentanyl and carfentanil that cause death by cessation of breathing. Many times, the actual strength of the dose of opioids

purchased from illegal drug dealers is unknown or greater than expected.

The federal government has encouraged pharmaceutical companies to develop "tamper-resistant" prescription opioids, so that recreational users who illegally obtain them cannot crush them and snort them. An example is when oxycodone and Oxycontin tablets were made crush-proof starting in 2010. Some users found a way to illegally boil and inject the drugs, spreading HIV and hepatitis C with dirty needles. Others just decided to switch to the easier-to-obtain and user-friendlier heroin, available for a fifth of the price of "street prescription opioids."

Meanwhile, state and federal regulators pressure health care providers to curtail the prescription of opioids, often making genuine acute and chronic pain patients suffer needlessly. Over the past two decades, 49 states have set up Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs to monitor the prescribing habits of providers, often with the effect of intimidating them into being more frugal in prescribing certain medications.

How has that been working out? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that opioid overdose deaths continue to soar, reaching an all-time high of more than 33,000 in their latest report — mostly due to heroin overdoses.

OUR VIEW:

Studies show that monitoring programs could be associated with driving desperate pain patients to the illegal market, where counterfeit and laced opioid pills and heroin are readily available.

If we are really interested in addressing the opioid overdose problem, we should get government out of the way and let doctors be doctors. Trust health care providers to follow their best judgment, use "harm reduction" strategies and abide by their oath to ease pain and suffering and "do no harm."



Zakaria: Why Trump won

(CNN)The real question of the 2016 presidential election isn't so much why did Donald Trump win, as why did he even get close?

After all, Trump was a totally unconventional candidate who broke all the rules and did things that would have destroyed anyone else running for president. So why did he break through?

Here's the answer: America is now divided along four lines, each one reinforcing the others. Call them the four Cs.

The first is capitalism. There was a time when the American economy moved in tandem with its middle class. As the economy grew, so did

middle class employment and wages. But over the last few decades that link has been broken. The economy has been humming along, but it now enriches mostly those with education, training, and capital. The other Americans have been left behind.

The second divide is about culture. In recent decades, we've seen large scale immigration; African-Americans and Hispanics rising to a more central place in society; and gays being accorded equal rights. All of this has meant new cultures and narratives have received national attention. And it's worried a segment of the older, white population, which fears that the national culture they grew up with is

fading. One comprehensive study found that after party loyalty, the second strongest predictor of a Trump voter was "fears of cultural displacement."

The third divide in America today is about class. The Trump vote is in large part an act of class rebellion, a working class revolt against know-it-all elites who run the country. These voters will stick with Donald Trump even as he flails, rather than vindicate the elite, urban view of him.

The final C in this story is communication. We have gone from an America where people watched three networks that provided a uniform view of the world to one

where everyone can pick their own channel, message, and now even their own facts.

All these forces have been at work for decades, but in recent years, the Republican Party has been better able to exploit them and identify with those Americans who feel frustrated, anxious, angry -- even desperate about the direction that the country is headed in. Donald Trump capitalized on these trends even more thoroughly, speaking openly to people's economic anxieties, cultural fears, and class rebellion. He promised simple solutions, mostly aimed at others -- Mexicans, Muslims, Chinese people and, of course, the elites and the media.

Trump went from Manhattan outsider to the presidency 01:53

It worked. He won. Whether his solutions are even enacted is



In another case of projection, President Trump routinely refers to the *New York Times* as "failing." In reality the Times is seeing record subscription numbers. It is the White House that is failing.

Trump can't get the repeal of Obamacare, or any other legislative priority, through a Republican-controlled Congress. He has had no real achievements other than the confirmation of Justice Neil Gorsuch. It turns out that a president with under-40 percent approval ratings can't strong-arm legislators into doing his will, and Trump's clumsy attempts to do so have predictably backfired.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke threatened to block federal projects in Alaska if Senator Lisa Murkowski didn't back the Republican health-care "plan." As chairwoman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Murkowski let her displeasure be known by stalling a nomination that Zinke wants, and then by voting against the health bill anyway. She can now make life miserable for Zinke for as long as she wants, because her committee oversees his department. As the Washington Post noted, this is "political malpractice" of a high order, but it is typical of Trump's amateurish operation.

The health-care bill was only the second of two major legislative defeats Trump suffered last week. The other was the approval by veto-proof margins in both houses of sanctions against Russia, thus killing Trump's chances of delivering the rapprochement that Mike Flynn evidently promised the Russian ambassador before the inauguration.

Yet another repudiation of the president came from his own Department of Defense. Trump tweeted an order banning transgendered individuals from military service, apparently without consulting the Pentagon's leaders in advance. The generals, in turn, let it be known that they were not going to act on Trump's tweets until the White House delivers a formal order and Secretary of

another matter. But the real victory will come for this country when someone looks at these deep forces that are dividing it and tries to construct a politics that will bridge them. Rather than accept that America must remain a country split

between two tribes -- each uncomprehending of the other, both bitter and hostile -- he or she would speak in a language that unites them.

That kind of leadership would win not just elections -- but a place of honor in American history.

Boot : Donald Trump Is Already a Lame Duck

Defense Jim Mattis — who was on vacation and thunderously silent — issues implementation instructions. So Trump can't even get "my generals," as he refers to the leaders of America's armed forces, to carry out his rash edicts.

Meanwhile, the world becomes an ever-more dangerous place, with both Iran and North Korea testing long-range missiles. Kim Jong-un either already has, or will soon have, the ability to incinerate Washington. But Trump can barely notice world crises, because he is too preoccupied tending to his own, self-created crises.

The president spent much of last week focused on his feud with Attorney General Jeff Sessions and — by proxy — with then-White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus. The proxy in the latter case was, of course, Trump's foul-mouthed Mini-Me, Anthony Scaramucci, who appears to have wandered into Washington straight off the set of *The Wolf of Wall Street*.

"The Mooch," as he likes to be called, has taken a unique approach to his job as White House communications director. Shortly after taking the post, he accused Priebus of a "felony" for having supposedly leaked his financial disclosure form. In truth, the Export-Import Bank, where Scaramucci had previously been slated to go, had released the document in the normal course of business. This was merely a warm-up to the main act — the Mooch's gobsmacking interview with the *New Yorker*. He bad-mouthed Priebus ("a fucking paranoid-schizophrenic") and Steve Bannon ("I'm not Steve Bannon, I'm not trying to suck my own cock"), threatened to fire the entire White House communications staff and vowed to "fucking kill all the leakers."

No previous White House aide in history has ever said anything remotely like this on the record. (Imagine what Mooch says off-the-record — and yes he did go off-the-record with the *New Yorker* at one point.) In any other White House it would have been grounds for instant dismissal. Not this one. Trump evidently "loved" the

Mooch's tirade so much that he fired not Scaramucci but Priebus. What kind of message does that send to other administration employees — and to every other American — about what kind of behavior this president expects?

The new chief of staff is the retired Marine general John Kelly, until now Trump's Secretary of Homeland Security. No doubt Trump hopes that the general can straighten out what ails the White House. It is, of course, a vain hope, because, to quote the Mooch, "the fish stinks from the head."

The dead-fish stench emanating from the White House has wafted all the way to the Justice Department. The president has been engaged in a passive-aggressive campaign against the man he calls "our beleaguered A.G." — beleaguered, of course, by Trump himself. Trump spent a week publicly needling Sessions for recusing himself from the investigation into the Trump campaign's Russia ties. There is plenty one can criticize Sessions for, including his apparent lies about his contacts with the Russians last year, but not for this. Having been involved in the Trump campaign, Sessions had no choice but to recuse himself.

Naturally, Trump is fine with Session's convenient lapses of memory. He only objected when Sessions did the ethical and honest thing. For good measure, the president has been berating Sessions for taking "a VERY weak position on Hillary Clinton crimes (where are E-mails & DNC server) & Intel leakers!"

Trying to use the criminal justice system to strike back at an enemy of the president is an impeachable offense. So is obstructing an investigation of the president and his aides. But the president appears so terrified of what Special Counsel Robert Mueller may uncover that he is willing to risk a constitutional crisis to stop the Kremlingate investigation. Yet Trump, a consummate bully, is too cowardly to either confront Sessions directly or to fire him; he prefers to make Sessions' life such a living hell that he will resign, thereby allowing the

appointment of a stooge who will fire Mueller.

Trump's mistreatment of Sessions — one of his earliest and most loyal followers — has elicited a backlash from Sessions' friends in the Senate and in the nationalist-populist movement. Newt Gingrich, Rush Limbaugh, Tucker Carlson, David Horowitz, and all of Trump's other toadies professed shock at one of their heroes mistreating another.

It's interesting to see what constitutes a breaking point for the Trump crowd. They were fine with Trump's ignorance, inconsistency, and mendacity; his crazy conspiracy theories and unhinged tweets; his vile attacks on women, war heroes, and the press; his demonization of Mexicans and Muslims; his pussy-grabbing and general, all-around loathfulness; his kowtowing to Vladimir Putin, Rodrigo Duterte, and other loathsome dictators; his son's eagerness to collude with the Russian government and his own attempts to obstruct justice by firing the FBI director. The Trumpites excused all of this inexcusable conduct on the grounds that "at least he fights."

True, he fights. But what does he fight for? Not for conservative principles. He has no principles. Trump is not pursuing an "America First" policy. He is pursuing a "me first" policy. He will not fight for legislative priorities such as health-care reform — a subject he does not understand or care about — but he will fight to obstruct an investigation into his own misconduct.

None of this should be remotely surprising to anyone who has been awake for the past two years. Jeb Bush accurately called Trump the "chaos candidate" and predicted that he would be the "chaos president." This did not faze his fans for a second. They wanted someone to come in and shake up Washington. Well, they got what they wanted. Now we must all live with the calamitous consequences. Trump may be the first president ever to have become a lame duck with 3 and a half years remaining in his term of office.



Klaas : How Trump embodies the Seven Deadly Sins

We are all human. But Trump departs from all presidents since Nixon in that he is unable to control his impulses and manage his sins.

Last week in Trumpland was a crazy disaster. The president thanked children in the Boy Scouts for votes they didn't cast and told them about a "hot cocktail party." He publicly attacked his attorney general for refusing to obstruct justice. Trump also publicly confirmed the existence of a covert CIA program on Twitter before tweeting out a new military policy without telling the Pentagon.

With all those earnest policy-driven lobbying efforts, it's a complete shocker his health care bill somehow didn't pass.

This should be of concern to both Republicans and Democrats. A President Marco Rubio or Mitt Romney would be taking full advantage of a Republican House and Senate to make sweeping change. President Trump is failing as president not because he's a Republican but because of who he is — the walking embodiment of his Seven Deadly Sins that he cannot control.

Anthony Scaramucci's aggressive incompetence

Trump isn't learning on the job, he just doesn't care

Vainglory/Pride

Trump's ego drives him. Donald Trump has been consistently inconsistent when it comes to policy ideas, but his commitment to Donald Trump is absolute.

Vainglory derailed his agenda with distractions and defeats. He made the Boy Scouts speech about himself, rather than about serving

others. He couldn't handle the slight from Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski's vote against the GOP health bill, so he threatened all of Alaska — thereby cementing her fateful opposition. And he held a rally in Ohio — not to build support for a vote he already had or to make the case for a policy agenda — but because he can only recharge with the adoration of a cheering crowd. Then, he left the chanting multitudes and tweeted about crowd size — the 252nd time he has done so. (For comparison, he's tweeted 36 times about Afghanistan). Governing is about others, but Trump hasn't been able to bury his pride.

Wrath

When Trump's temper flares, he is his own worst enemy. And yet, his staff cannot seem to rein in his most wrathful impulses.

Last week, Trump lashed out at allies that he perceives as enemies who have crossed him. He relentlessly and repeatedly attacked his own attorney general, alienating his base in the process. He attacked the acting FBI director, an unwise move for someone being actively investigated. Trump sanctioned a public attack by his communications director on his chief of staff. And his early insult against Arizona Sen. John McCain, for being captured in Vietnam, came back to haunt him as the Republican health care bill failed by one unexpected vote — McCain's.

Sloth

A President Rubio or Romney probably could have gotten a health care bill passed. Trump didn't do the necessary work. Despite claiming that he has very little time to watch TV, aides say he is constantly fixated on cable

news programs (and he often tweets responses to *Fox & Friends* in real-time). He told lawmakers they shouldn't leave Washington until they passed a health care bill, then promptly left himself for a weekend of golf. After slamming President Barack Obama dozens of times about golf habits, Trump has spent 22% of his days as president at his golf properties. If you're angry about Trump's slow pace of legislative change, that might be a good place to start.

Gluttony or the Lack of Self Control

It's no secret that Trump loves KFC, well-done steak with ketchup and "beautiful chocolate cake" for those occasions when he's bombing Syria. But Trump's main sin in this realm is his inability to control his impulses. He won't listen to lawyers. He won't listen to his wife's cyberbullying initiative. The more he lets his impulses rule, the less he governs effectively.

Lust

From his *Playboy* past to Howard Stern interviews boasting that he would date his daughter if she weren't a relative, Trump sells an image laced with lust. It has gotten him in trouble, with the *Access Hollywood* tape the most damaging blow. Those lustful failings and his casual misogyny have made him historically unpopular with women, thereby kneecapping his presidency. Just over two in 10 American women approve of Trump. Given how crucial women are to victory in swing elections, this is undercutting his ability to pressure wavering members of Congress on hard votes.

Jealousy

Trump's Twitter tantrums expose a jealousy for his rivals and a constant attempt to measure up to

them. He is obsessed with the fact that Democrat Hillary Clinton won the popular vote. In response, he launched a bogus voter fraud commission that is backfiring. He falsely claims that millions voted illegally. And Trump boasts about his election victory in grossly improper ways, including to the Boy Scouts last week. When polls show him in a negative light, he calls them fake. And his impulse to compare himself to Obama or Clinton repeatedly prompts him to go off message, ranting rather than talking about "Infrastructure Week" or "Energy Week."

Greed

"I don't do it for the money," Trump claims in the opening to *The Art of the Deal*. "I do it to do it." Every piece of available evidence contradicts that claim. Trump cares about money. A lot. His greed is damaging his presidency as lawsuits and ethics violations rack up. Trump faces an emoluments lawsuit. The head of the independent federal Office Government Ethics resigned after clashes with Trump over his failure to divest from his businesses. And his past business dealings may come back to haunt him as Special Counsel Bob Mueller probes for financial crimes.

American presidents all have failings. We are all human. But Trump departs from all presidents since Richard Nixon in that he is unable to control his impulses and manage his sins. For the last six months, they have undermined the Republican agenda. Last week — which ended, post-health care, with a major staff shakeup and Trump encouraging cops to rough up suspects — was no exception. It's hard to imagine anything changing, because Trump has shown no signs of changing.

the Atlantic Depravity Is Downstream of Donald Trump

Friedersdorf

On Sunday, *Breitbart* published a column by Susan Berry, who began by invoking the web site's late founder: "Andrew Breitbart famously said, 'Politics is downstream of culture,'" she began, using the hyperlink to direct readers to this *Red State* post:

Andrew Breitbart, the late ever-controversial right-wing gonzo journalist (not to be confused with the dreary Trump-propaganda organ that now bears his name) used to have a saying that "politics is downstream of culture."

Meaning that:

1. People's political opinions are mostly not thought-out or analytical so much as an expression of what they think is valuable, cool, scary, smart, stupid, impressive to their friends.
2. People generally put more of their hearts and free time into cultural pursuits—from mass media and video game consumption to churches, schools, museums, gun clubs, bowling leagues, etc.—than political ones, so the attitudes that pervade the larger spaces of their lives affect the smaller ones, not just in what they believe but who they know and trust.
3. Young people in particular are much more into getting their values and their "facts" from cultural rather than explicitly political sources.

After approvingly linking to that article describing today's *Breitbart* as a dreary, Trump-propaganda organ, Berry proceeded with her own *Breitbart* article:

Andrew Breitbart famously said, "Politics is downstream of culture," and while establishment Republicans seem unwilling to

defend America's culture and values on many fronts, President Donald Trump is already changing the country's politics by taking back its culture from progressives.

Here's how.

She then offered seven examples: Trump banned transgender people in the military; signed an executive order pertaining to abortion; signed another executive order on religious freedom; signed a bill that affects state funding of Planned Parenthood; appointed a Supreme Court justice; made sound appointments to the Department of Health and Human Services; and vowed to defend law enforcement.

Notice that Berry inverted Andrew Breitbart's claim: She cited what are largely political actions, arguing that cultural change is downstream from them.

The inadequacy of the metaphor is part of the problem here. Streams always flow in one direction. Culture often influences politics, but culture is often influenced by politics, too. In fact, much of the Republican Party has gambled that political gains they expect from the Trump administration outweigh the cultural costs that Trump is exacting.

Fans of Andrew Breitbart who believe that politics is downstream of culture should look not just at Trump's political actions, but also at how he is changing American culture.

1.

Way back in 2011, the public moralist Dennis Prager wrote a column titled "F-Word Laced Speech Disqualifies Donald Trump from the Presidency." In it, he argued that there is an enormous moral difference "between using an expletive in private and using one in a public speech," that the latter "is degrading to the user, to the listener and to society," and that Trump didn't merely use an expletive in a political speech, but "upon seeing the enthusiastic reaction, felt encouraged to use it again and again."

He continued:

The audience's reaction is even more important—and more distressing—than Trump's use of the word. Had there been booing, or had someone who invited him arisen to ask that he not use such language, or had some of the women walked out, the good name of the Republican Party and of conservative values would have been preserved. But if Republican women—and I emphasize both the party and the gender—find the F-word used by a potential candidate for president of the United States amusing, America is more coarsened than I had imagined. If we cannot count on Republicans and conservatives to maintain standards of public decency and

civility, to whom shall we look?

Today, we've gone far beyond curse words in a speech. Trump is unapologetically and publicly indecent or uncivil on almost a daily basis. And there is no way for the Republican Party to credibly advocate for public decency and civility so long as it supports Trump.

2.

As Peggy Noonan observed in an astute *Wall Street Journal* column, Trump's sharp break from "traditional norms and forms of American masculinity" and public displays of weakness—in her words, his continually acting like "a drama queen"—is giving young boys, like the ones that he addressed recently at the Boy Scout Jamboree, a new, self-obsessed, and overindulgent template for what maleness is:

The way American men used to like seeing themselves, the template they most admired, was the strong silent type celebrated in classic mid-20th century films—Gary Cooper, John Wayne, Henry Fonda. In time the style shifted, and we wound up with the nervous and chatter. More than a decade ago the producer and writer David Chase had his Tony Soprano mourn the disappearance of the old style: "What they didn't know is once they got Gary Cooper in touch with his feelings they wouldn't be able to shut him up!" The new style was more like that of Woody Allen. His characters couldn't stop talking about their emotions, their resentments and needs. They were self-justifying as they acted out their cowardice and anger.

But he was a comic. It was funny. He wasn't putting it out as a new template for maleness. Donald Trump now is like an unfunny Woody Allen. Who needs a template for how to be a man? A lot of boys and young men, who've grown up in a culture confused about what men are and do.

3.

In just the last week, Trump has twice attacked the rule of law. Andrew Sullivan wrote about one example in *New York* magazine.

"Day after day, the president has publicly savaged his own attorney general for doing the only thing possible with an investigation into a political campaign he was a key part of: recusing himself," he observed. "And the point of the president's fulminations was that the recusal prevented Sessions from obstructing that very investigation. The president, in other words, has been openly attacking his own attorney general for not subverting the rule of law."

And in a speech to police officers, Trump said:

When you see these thugs being thrown into the back of a paddy wagon, you just see them thrown in, rough, I said, please don't be too nice. Like when you guys put somebody in the car and you're protecting their head, you know, the way you put their hand over. Like, don't hit their head and they've just killed somebody. Don't hit their head. I said, you can take the hand away, okay?

This prompted clapping from many of the police officers immediately behind Trump in footage of the speech and cheering from some of the people in the crowd—the words were *immediately* corrosive to their culture—followed by a series of criticisms of Trump from cops in leadership positions in cities all over the United States.

4.

As I noted last September, Trump has a cruel streak. "He willfully causes pain and distress to others. And he repeats this public behavior so frequently that it's fair to call it a character trait. Any single example would be off-putting but forgivable. Being shown many examples across many years should make any decent person recoil in disgust."

The list of examples has only grown in the interim—and we have every indication that Trump will continue to flaunt his cruelty to others in public regularly for the next four years.

Later on in that *Red State* post that I quoted at the top, Berry writes that "Andrew Breitbart himself thought

Donald Trump was a con man and no conservative, but he doubtlessly would have enjoyed the showmanship and sheer disruption of Trump's primary campaign. And as we sift through the rubble left in his wake and look for a path forward, we should not overlook Breitbart's dictum. Because for all the talk about the *politics* of 'Trumpism,' a major part of what allowed Trump to rise and prevail in the primary was his prominence in popular culture as well as the generally debased state of American culture in general these days."

That is true. And it doesn't speak well of Breitbart's legacy that the website and populist ethos he helped to create did so much to elevate someone he saw as a con man.

The Republican Party should be more farsighted about embracing nihilistic populism.

As David French put it, "Words still matter, and the president's words are often reprehensible. A conservative can fight for tax reform, celebrate military victories over ISIS in Mosul, and applaud Trump's judicial appointments while also condemning Trump's vile tweets and criticizing his impulsiveness and lack of discipline. A good conservative can even step back and take a longer view, resolving to fight for the cultural values that tribalism degrades. Presidents matter not just because of their policies but also because of their impact on the character of the people they govern."

Republicans should turn on Trump, en masse, right now. The longer the president enjoys a large degree of institutional support, rather than being regarded as a pariah by all, the more likely it is that other indecent, uncivil, weak, self-justifying, overindulgent, cruel men with little regard for truth or the rule of law will rise.

NATIONAL
REVIEW
ONLINE

Hanson : Trump Tweets & Craziness: Useful Tool Only When Limited

12-15 minutes

Occasionally insanity, real or feigned, has its political advantages—largely because of its ancillary traits of unpredictability and an aura of immunity from appeals to reason, sobriety, and moderation.

Rogues often try to appear as crazy as mad hatters—sometimes defined by issuing threats, throwing temper tantrums, saying outrageous things, dressing weirdly, or acting peculiarly.

In nuclear poker, the House of Kim in North Korea has welded its supposed hereditary madness to nuclear weapons—to achieve both

deterrence and periodic shakedowns of massive foreign aid.

Turkish president Recep Erdogan is also a touchy nut. He usually wins an unearned wide berth and political concessions from the West by his offensive habits of saying anything to anyone at any time—in between episodic threats to the West to yank NATO troops out of Turkey, to send

along even more Middle Eastern young males from war-torn states into the heart of Europe, or to demagogue Muslim tensions with Israel.

Trump removes Anthony Scaramucci from communications director role

Even democratic leaders occasionally adopt the mask of madness for diplomatic and political advantage.

John F. Kennedy, during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, openly sought advice from the caricatured Strangelovian (but actually authentic hero) General Curtis LeMay. To his advisers and adversaries, the brinksman Kennedy could pose as receiving wisdom from LeMay — who less than two decades earlier had burned down Tokyo — to ponder a chilling solution.

Recall Kennedy's prior disastrous summit in Vienna, in 1961, with a bullying Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev: "I've got a terrible problem if he [Khrushchev] thinks I'm inexperienced and have no guts." From that encounter, Kennedy learned that rhetorical gymnastics and judicious predictability earned him only scorn — the brawler from the Stalingrad era assessed him as timid and weak. The Soviet leader, in his own bouts of public buffoonery, was not averse to pounding his fist (or even banging his shoe) on his U.N. delegate's desk in protest.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, National Security Adviser and later Secretary of State Henry Kissinger sometimes allegedly played the good-cop "voice of reason" to President Richard Nixon's bad-cop and purportedly "mad bomber" persona. At various times, Kissinger sought to convince the North Vietnamese, Arab dictators, and the Soviet Union to deal diplomatically with a sober American Dr. Jekyll such as himself rather than with an unpredictable Commander in Chief Nixon (sometimes playing the role of Mr. Hyde).

Somebody as sober and judicious as Ronald Reagan on occasion seemed to follow the beat of a different drummer, thereby reminding foreign leaders that he was no cool, collected — and utterly predictable — Jimmy Carter.

Reagan's hot-mic comic but dangerous nuttiness — "My fellow Americans, I'm pleased to tell you today that I've signed legislation that will outlaw Russia forever — we begin bombing in five minutes" — purportedly caused an entire Soviet army to go on alert. And perhaps it reminded the Soviets of the radical new American approach to the Cold War.

And what did Reagan actually mean in a nuclear age of mutually assured destruction when he announced, "Here's my strategy on the Cold War: We win; they lose"?

The answer, apparently, was for the Soviets to figure out.

In contrast, again, as in the case of Jimmy Carter who sermonized constantly on what he would never do, Barack "no drama" Obama seemed to think his predictability and mellifluousness would win empathy and respect (rather than confirmation of frailty) from world leaders — the vast majority of whom came to power through thuggery rather than free elections. The result was a green light for exploitation, not reciprocity for magnanimity, from Russia, China, the entire Middle East, Iran, and radical Islam.

In the first few months of the Trump administration, highly respected retired officers, former CEOs, and congressmen, such as Secretary of Defense James Mattis, National Security Adviser H. R. McMaster, Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly (now the president's chief of staff), CIA director Michael Pompeo, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, by design or default, seemed amid the chaos to have found some advantages at home and abroad by translating President Trump's impulsive pronouncements into diplomatese.

For example, NATO members were probably forewarned that they really should meet their promised 2 percent obligations of defense spending before a mercurial trash-talking Trump went ballistic — and did who knows what? Good administration cops tell our trading partners that they should address their huge surpluses with America, before the raging bull Trump shatters the entire globalized china shop.

Trump's *Art of the Deal* series of the late 1980s often gave the game away with his boilerplate advice for the would-be wheeler-dealer: Remain radically unpredictable ("sometimes it pays to get a little wild") and demand far more initially than one would eventually settle for. Bouts of feigned craziness can conveniently evaporate when they have served their purpose and a profitable deal seems to need responsible closing.

In general, for the first six months, Trump's wild ride — rhetorical wars against the deep state, the media, the Democratic-Progressive party, the Republican establishment — has, despite the disdainful assessment of coastal establishmentarians, in truth gained himself some impressive results and, abroad, also put our adversaries sometimes off balance..

Trump has assembled perhaps the finest conservative cabinet we've seen in 50 years. His initiatives on

energy, deregulation, and illegal immigration have surprised even his base supporters. Unemployment is down; corporate profits, economic growth, and Wall Street are up. The same is true with his judicial appointments. Trump's nocturnal tweets, his unscripted huge campaign rallies, his off-the-cuff remarks to left-wing reporters — all shock and stun, and yet they seemed to have offered political advantages that the proverbial and predictable Washington swamp has never fully appreciated.

The key, however, to long-term effective use of political madness, authentic or fabricated, hinges on a few requisites with which Trump now has a rendezvous.

Madness must be episodic and seemingly out of character. It cannot be chronic and characteristic. If the latter, it descends into predictable buffoonery. Outcasts such as the late Venezuela strongman Hugo Chávez or current Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte may have enjoyed popular domestic support for their outrageousness, but they soon grew wearisome internationally and earned chuckles rather than frightened respect. Boris Yeltsin ended up as predictably crude rather than merely fickle. John McCain's temper tantrums often served no good effect other than to raise questions about his disposition.

When Trump grafts his moving orations, such as the Polish or Inauguration addresses, with his mercurial nocturnal tweets, he can appear unsettling to his enemies. Yet when the latter electronic blurts become normal and the former oratory is uncharacteristic, Trump descends into the unserious territory of Silvio Berlusconi. Always being too eager to offend can be as counterproductive as being too predictably zealous to appease.

Second, good cops who understand the game are essential. Such a symphony requires behind-the-scenes orchestration, not compulsive impulsiveness. Tweeting a major firing or policy change on the home front might warn North Korea or Iran that Trump does not lose sleep over a tough decision — but the effect is lost when a cabinet officer is quoted as "appalled" or "upset" over the precipitousness of the decision. And when aides have to go public explaining that "the real" Trump is actually a nice guy, the effect is likewise muted — given that they seek to correct the image of a self-indulgent adolescent, not that of a deadly serious commander in chief venting occasional righteous anger. In this regard, the new appointment

of the sober and tough John Kelly as chief of the White House staff takes on paramount importance — if he can make use of Trump's unpredictability for predictable diplomatic and political advantage.

Third, madness is always a diminishing asset. At some point, all the good- and bad-cop playacting, and the proper alchemy of restraint and irascibility, must at least occasionally be followed by not just action but meaningful action. Obama ruined his international reputation by not bombing Syria to save gassed children after he'd issued a red line. But he did not redeem his credibility when he precariously bombed Qaddafi out of Libya — given that he perverted a U.N. resolution rather than confirmed a prior ultimatum, and he seemed to whine about his wrong action rather than be willing to right it by sending forces to stanch the terrorist wound he had inflicted.

So far, Trump has emphasized his unpredictability by allowing a field general to drop a MOAB weapon in Afghanistan and by bombing a chemical-weapons depot in Syria. But after his military braggadocio and his wild threats to redefine trade and build a wall, Trump will either have to put on a muzzle or follow through on his ultimata. Ranting madly about "making Mexico pay" for the wall will become an embarrassment — unless he quietly slaps a federal transfer tax on the \$25 billion in remittances sent annually to Mexico, the vast majority of that sum likely wired by illegal aliens, who in some cases rely on American federal and state entitlements to subsidize their Mexican largesse.

The utility of madness hinges on the world's seeing it as a force for good rather than as self-destructiveness or petty bullying.

Finally, the utility of madness hinges on the world's seeing it as a force for good rather than as self-destructiveness or petty bullying. "Bombing the s*** out of ISIS" is a way of saying that there is no room in civilization for medieval beheadings; yet constantly sending out berating tweets about the gentlemanly and competent Jeff Sessions becomes electronic playground browbeating.

Declaring the fired Reince Priebus "a good man" is magnanimous; announcing on Twitter the decision to let him go comes across more as sloppy than as iron-willed. Whispering to the Soviets that Nixon was, in Augustus fashion, railing nocturnally in the White House halls was effective; but Nixon's shoving an apologetic press secretary Ron Ziegler, for all to see

on TV, was a counterproductive tantrum.

A clearly upset Reagan nearly lost it when announcing the firing of the air-traffic controllers. But his domestic audience applauded Reagan's angry pushback against a greedy union threatening the public safety, and his enemies abroad thought he might turn such

righteous (and out-of-character) ire on themselves.

In the past, Trump's madness has pulverized his primary GOP enemies as well as Hillary Clinton, who all thought they could shed their Beltway prim personas to climb into his muddy arena and trade blow for blow.

As president, Trump's chaos and erratic rhetoric, when in concert with an impressive cabinet, has sometimes served him well. But if he fails to see that there is an art of madness like his own arts of the deal, then he will soon become wearisome and Berlusconi-like rather than feared and Reaganesque.

Let us hope that the principled and experienced John Kelly, in his new role as chief of staff, can maximize the advantages of Trump's fits of apparent madness by insisting they are calculated and *fits* — rather than habitual and characteristic.

The New York Times Mounk : The Past Week Proves That Trump Is Destroying Our Democracy

Yascha Mounk

America is on its way to a full-blown constitutional crisis.

Over just a few days last week, President Trump and his allies stepped up attacks on Robert Mueller, the special counsel investigating the campaign's connections to Russia. They tried to push Attorney General Jeff Sessions out of office. They thought out loud about whether the president can pardon himself.

This all points to the same conclusion: Mr. Trump is willing to deal a major blow to the rule of law — and the American Republic — in order to end an independent investigation into his Russia ties.

It is tempting to picture the demise of democracy as a Manichaeian drama in which the stakes are clear from the start and the main actors fully understand their roles: Would-be dictators rail against democracy, hire violent thugs to do their bidding and vow to destroy the opposition. When they demand expanded powers or attack independent institutions, their supporters and opponents alike realize that authoritarianism has arrived.

There have, in fact, been a few times and places when the villains were quite as villainous, and the heroes quite as heroic. (Think Germany in the 1930s.) But in most cases, the demise of democracy has been far more gradual and far easier to overlook.

In their first years in office, Vladimir Putin in Russia, Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey and Viktor Orban in Hungary claimed that they

wanted to fix, rather than cripple, democratic institutions. Even as it became clear that these strongmen sought to consolidate power, most of their opponents told themselves that they were saving their courage for the right moment. By the time the full extent of the danger had become incontrovertible, it was too late to mount an effective resistance.

In some ways, the United States seems far from such a situation today. The Trump administration, after all, appears weak: It is relatively unpopular, mired in scandal and divided by infighting — Anthony Scaramucci's 10-day tenure is just the latest example. And it faces determined opposition from courts, the news media, state and local governments and ordinary citizens. If Mr. Trump's presidency ends in humiliation, future generations may well conclude that it was bound to fail all along.

But in other respects the United States is already well on the way to what I have, in my academic work, called "democratic deconsolidation." Mr. Trump is increasingly emulating the playbook of popularly elected strongmen who have done deep, lasting damage to their countries' democratic institutions.

In recent weeks, he has treated a gathering of Boy Scouts like a campaign rally. He has asked soldiers for political support at a ceremonial event. He has implied that policemen should rough up suspects they arrest. He has continued to feud with the country's intelligence community. And he has suggested he still wants Hillary Clinton prosecuted.

Mr. Trump nonetheless has many supporters. While a majority of Americans believes that the president is doing a bad job, around 40 percent of voters — and some 80 percent of Republicans — approve of his performance. A number of Republican senators and congressmen have reportedly objected to Mr. Trump's attacks on Mr. Sessions and voted against parts of his legislative agenda, but most have yet to oppose him publicly.

This is worrying. The Constitution cannot defend itself. If Congress does not stand up to Mr. Trump because Republicans are afraid of their own base, the president may be able to obstruct the course of justice with impunity. Worse, he may then conclude that he can get away with violating even more basic limits on his power.

If Congress stands idly by as he fires Mr. Mueller, as it did when he fired the F.B.I. director, James Comey, it might prove similarly pliable should he disregard court rulings, attempt to close down critical newspapers or order his appointees at the Department of Justice to indict Mrs. Clinton.

Congress must send a clear message that these types of violations won't be tolerated. If Mr. Trump fires Mr. Mueller, Congress can ask him to continue his investigation under the auspices of the legislative branch. And if Mr. Trump pardons himself, disregards court rulings or blatantly oversteps the boundaries of his legitimate authority in some other way, Congress should impeach him.

No flashing light will announce that the very survival of democracy is now at stake if Mr. Mueller is fired. And since nobody can say for sure that the Constitution will become toothless if congressional Republicans let yet another infraction pass, their instinct will be to defer their patriotic duty to some more opportune moment in the future. But that moment may never come. There may never be a time when we know for sure that this decision, today, will determine whether the American republic lives or dies.

In Hungary, democracy did not end when Mr. Orban staffed the electoral commission with his cronies, or when he put loyalists in charge of state television stations or even when he changed the Constitution to expand his powers. But now that he has taken all these steps, the opposition has little chance of ousting him at the next elections. Slowly but surely, Hungary has ceased to be a real democracy.

The temptation to delay opposing Mr. Trump until the right moment comes along is understandable. It's also very dangerous. Even if congressional Republicans abdicate their duty, the Constitution may turn out to be unusually resilient. But the only sure way to save the Republic is for them to start standing up to the president's authoritarian behavior — not next week, or next month, but today.