

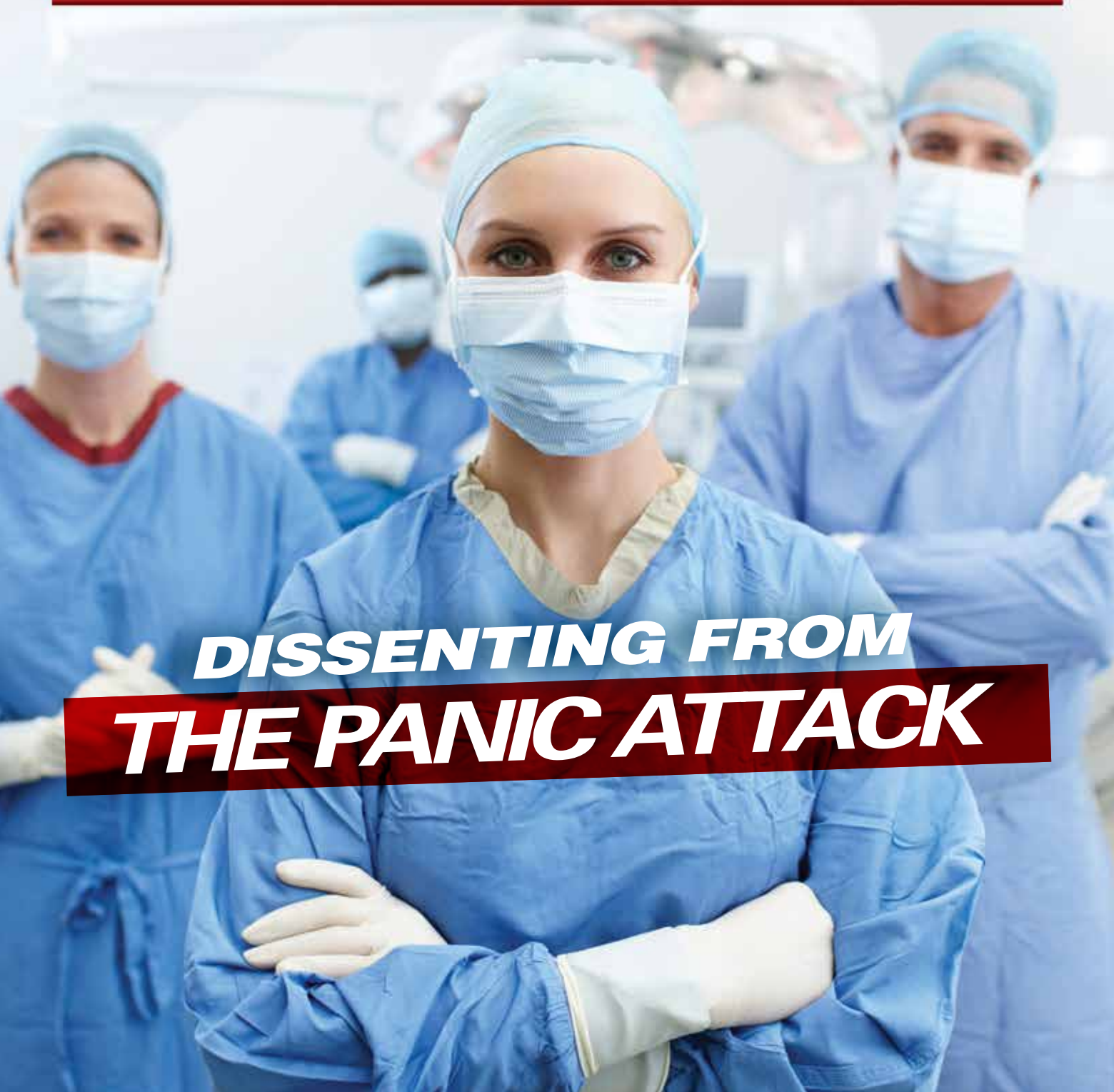
Should I Wear a Face Mask? • Patronizing Politicos • Questioning QAnon

June 8, 2020 • \$3.95

The New American

www.TheNewAmerican.com

THAT FREEDOM SHALL NOT PERISH



***DISSENTING FROM
THE PANIC ATTACK***



Dissenting From the Panic Attack

Even as major media and politicians are ramping up the rhetoric about the dangers of COVID-19, doctors and professors are coming forward to dispute claims about the dangers and proper treatment of the illness.
(June 8, 2020, 48pp) **TNA200608**

Newspapers
Spreading
The Word



CHECK OUT OUR OTHER ISSUES!

Trimming Big Government

Donald Trump was elected on promises to streamline and cut costs in government. While the streamlining may be happening, the cutting is not.
(March 23, 2020, 48pp) **TNA200323**

Next Step to World Government: Atlantic Union

Trade agreements between countries across the Atlantic sound like smart propositions to boost economic growth, but the Atlantic Union that is on the way would completely remake America's governance system — and make us a subordinate to unelected groups.
(March 9, 2020, 48pp) **TNA200309**

Freeing the Web From Big Tech

One's habits, purchases, beliefs, and associates are monitored on the Web by both Big Tech and Big Government, but there is a movement afoot to change all that.
(January 20, 2020, 48pp) **TNA200120**

Is Medicare for All the Cure-all?

Democrats are pushing Medicare for All, despite its massive costs, the failures of similar healthcare systems, and the fact that it's nothing like Medicare.
(January 6, 2020, 48pp) **TNA200106**

5G: The Potential and the Risks

Telecommunications using 5G promise super speed, allowing vast new computer applications, but 5G not only has some glitches, it holds huge potential for abuse.
(December 9, 2019, 48pp) **TNA191209**

QUANTITY	TITLE/DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PRICE
	Dissenting From...	<p style="text-align: center;">Mix or Match</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 copy \$3.95</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10 copies \$15.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 25 copies \$31.25</p> <p><i>100+ copies*</i></p>
	Trimming Big Government	
	Next Step...	
	Freeing the Web...	
	Is Medicare...	
	5G: The Potential and the Risks	
ENTER MIX OR MATCH QUANTITIES AND SUBTOTAL		

SUBTOTAL	SHIPPING (SEE CHART BELOW)	WI RESIDENTS ADD 5.5% SALES TAX	TOTAL

For shipments outside the U.S., please call for rates.

Number of Issues	Shipping/Handling
1-2 copies	\$7.20
3-10 copies	\$11.95
11-25 copies	\$17.80

For orders of more than 25 copies and for special rates for case lots of 100, call (800) 727-TRUE or go to ShopJBS.org



The Official Store of The John Birch Society
Order Online: www.ShopJBS.org
Credit-card orders call toll-free now!

Mail completed form to:
ShopJBS • P.O. BOX 8040
APPLETON, WI 54912
1-800-342-6491



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

- Check VISA Discover
 Money Order MasterCard American Express



Make checks payable to: **ShopJBS**

_____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

200608



KEEPING HIS CREATIONS THRIVING



Cosamin[®]
for **JOINT HEALTH**

FOR YOU

COSEQUIN[®]
Joint Health Supplement

FOR YOUR PET

Our Mission: To serve the Lord and glorify Him using the gifts He has given our employees to research, develop, manufacture, and market products that improve the quality of life for people and their pets.



Diamond M Ranch

**REGISTERED & COMMERCIAL
HEREFORDS**

**Range Bulls, Replacement Females, Stocker & Feeder Cattle
(one or a truckload)**

***A Fifth Generation Ranching Family
Engaged In Accenting The Hereford Influence***

**Box 99
Laurier, WA 99146
Len: 509/684-4380
(Summer phone)**

**The Diamond M Ranch Family
Len & Pat McIrvn
Bill & Roberta McIrvn
Justin & Kaleigh Hedrick
Mason & Natasha Knapp**

**646 Lake Rd.
Burbank, WA 99323
Len: 509/545-5676
(Winter phone & address)**

“This is a republic, not a democracy — Let’s keep it that way!”

COVER STORY

HEALTHCARE

10 Dissenting From the Panic Attack

by *Dennis Behreandt* — A growing body of scientists and medical professionals is beginning to dissent from the mainstream fearmongering over the coronavirus.

18 Should I Wear a Face Mask?

by *Cathy A. Spigarelli* — Not only can face masks be ineffective, they can help transmit the virus and worsen its effect.

FEATURES

POLITICS

22 Is the COVID-19 Death Toll Being Padded?

by *Dennis Behreandt* — Data about the prevalence and severity of COVID-19 are revealing a disease that, while serious, is not as deadly as public-health agencies and the mainstream media have reported.

25 Patronizing Politicos

by *Michael Tennant* — Even as they warn, badger, or call for arrests of those not abiding by coronavirus lockdowns, those who want lockdowns because they “care” ignore the quarantines.

29 Questioning QAnon

by *C. Mitchell Shaw* — QAnon is one or more bloggers who claim to have secret info from inside the Trump White House. Do they?

HISTORY — PAST AND PERSPECTIVE

35 Pandemic Response Makes Liberty Sick in the United States

by *Steve Byas* — As part of the coronavirus pandemic response, governors, mayors, and county officials have been tossing the Constitution and Bill of Rights into trash bins.

THE LAST WORD

44 Dear Costco, Here’s My Membership Card. Stuff it!

by *William F. Jasper*

DEPARTMENTS

- 5 Letters to the Editor
- 7 Inside Track
- 9 QuickQuotes
- 33 The Goodness of America
- 40 Exercising the Right
- 41 Correction, Please!



STEEX/Stock/Getty/ImagPlus



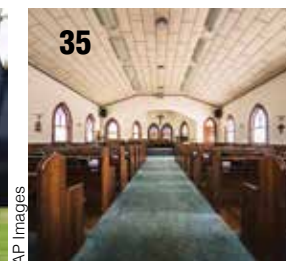
AP Images



AP Images



AP Images



AP Images

AP Images

TRAIL WINDS P L A Z A



SPACE AVAILABLE

5,640 square ft.

Call 239-677-7441 or Email dennyfog@aol.com

Cleveland Ave. (Rt. 41) • Ft. Myers, Florida • Stamra Inc.

Publisher & Editor
Gary Benoit

Senior Editor
William F. Jasper

Managing Editor
Kurt Williamsen

Web Editor
John T. Larabell

Foreign Correspondent
Alex Newman

Contributors

Bob Adelmann • Dennis Behreandt
Steve Byas • Raven Clabough
Selwyn Duke • Brian Farmer
Christian Gomez • Larry Greenley
Gregory A. Hession, J.D.
Ed Hiserodt • William P. Hoar
R. Cort Kirkwood • Patrick Krey, J.D.
Warren Mass • John F. McManus
James Murphy • Dr. Duke Pesta
Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.
C. Mitchell Shaw • Michael Tennant
Rebecca Terrell • Fr. James Thornton
Laurence M. Vance • Joe Wolverton II, J.D.

Creative Director
Joseph W. Kelly

Senior Graphic Designer
Katie Bradley

Research
Bonnie M. Gillis

Chief Strategy Officer
Bill Hahn

Advertising/Circulation Manager
Julie DuFrane

The New American

Printed in the U.S.A. • ISSN 0885-6540
P.O. Box 8040 • Appleton, WI 54912
920-749-3784 • 920-749-3785 (fax)
www.thenewamerican.com
editorial@thenewamerican.com

Rates are \$49 per year (Canada, add \$9; foreign, add \$27) Copyright ©2020 by American Opinion Publishing, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Appleton, WI and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send any address changes to THE NEW AMERICAN, P.O. Box 8040, Appleton, WI 54912.

JBS.org THE NEW AMERICAN is published twice monthly by American Opinion Publishing Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of The John Birch Society.

On Defense

The other night I had the opportunity to visit a local emergency room. I was able to speak with hospital personnel who not only treated patients with the coronavirus but had to be treated themselves. I spoke with a 30-something EMT who said he had been in a fight for his life.

Once you speak to those who have had this disease in a serious form and those who have treated these patients, one realizes the seriousness of this disease. You can look at statistics and other information that tell you there have been more serious diseases, and there have been, but this is not the common cold, no matter what some may try to tell you.

The response taken to this disease was logical and within reason, at least initially. We entered unknown medical territory and we have learned. Those of us in medicine realize that there are no absolutes, and there is a lot of second-guessing. Mistakes will be made. Yet, we will learn. Can we keep this on a scientific level and avoid the politics and second-guessing?

WILLIAM F. HINESER, DPM
Arvada, Colorado

The Left's Socialist Crusade

Donald Trump, Jr's mother was originally from Communist Czechoslovakia. While growing up, during the summer, Trump, Jr. spent about a month each year visiting his Czech grandmother. He became fluent in Czech and experienced the difficult life in a communist country. After the collapse of the Soviet empire, his Czech grandmother was able to watch CNN and was appalled by the pro-socialism she observed from Americans. Trump, Jr. revealed these events during a speech at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, California (televised by CSPAN). He also noted that 70 percent of millennials are open to voting socialistic, according to a recent poll.

Economics professor, columnist, and libertarian Dr. Walter Williams recently commented in a column that 33 percent of millennials even see communism as favorable. In other recent polls, over 50 percent of Democrats look favorably on

socialism. This is despite the fact that people who have experienced strict socialism are vocal about its failings.

My wife was a refugee from East Germany. Her family escaped before "the wall" went up, and they settled in West Germany. They had lived under the tyranny of Hitler's National Socialism (Nazis), as well as the Stalinist "international socialism."

Her family felt the communists were worse than the Nazis. Like Trump, Jr's grandmother, my wife is appalled by Americans' favorable view of socialism. She would like to pack them all off to Cuba or Venezuela so that they can experience the misery of living in a socialist country.

For myself, I am not so optimistic that left-wing liberal Democrats are capable of learning from such an experience: Consider that Senator Bernie Sanders spent his honeymoon in the Soviet Union and returned to the United States "impressed" by what he saw.

Back in the early '90s, shortly after the Soviet collapse, I attended a left-wing conference in Chicago. I approached the booth for the American Communist Party. I identified myself as a conservative and asked if they weren't chastened in their views by the collapse of communism.

They insisted that the Soviet-bloc countries "weren't communistic." They claimed they were "state capitalistic." Further, they believed that the people of Central and Eastern Europe were essentially "too dumb" to get communism right. But they *knew* that Americans could get it right.

Not only is the American Left sympathetic to the failed song of communism, it is as race-crazed as the Nazis, calling everyone racist, even as they divide groups by color, race, and creed.

Remember, too, that the Democrats' idea of "progressive" is to allow men in bathrooms with mothers, wives, daughters, and granddaughters.

THOMAS DRAKE
Valparaiso, Indiana

Send your letters to: THE NEW AMERICAN, P.O. Box 8040, Appleton, WI 54912. Or e-mail: editorial@thenewamerican.com. Due to volume received, not all letters can be answered. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.



ZIGNEGO READY MIX, INC.
W226 N2940 DUPLAINVILLE ROAD
WAUKESHA, WI 53186
262-542-0333 • www.Zignego.com

No-go Zones Are “Now ... at War With ... Western Civilization”

France’s Wuhan coronavirus lockdown measures, which only began easing days ago, were among the world’s strictest. “Permits to leave one’s home were limited to 60 minutes, once a day, and no farther than half a mile,” wrote the Gatestone Institute’s Dr. Guy Millière on May 10. Approximately 15.5 million people were stopped and checked, and 915,000 citations were issued.

But there is a group police have been told not to stop at all: People living in Muslim dominated no-go zones, euphemistically called *zones-urbaines-sensibles* (“sensitive urban zones”).

France’s no-go zones have exploded numerically from fewer than 100 in 2005 to more than 750 today, and “police enter them only by carefully preparing commando-like operations beforehand,” Millière asserts. “Gangs and radical imams seem totally in control.”

Another story presented by Millière illustrates this:

A few months ago, a police officer, Noam Anouar, who infiltrated Islamist circles, published a book, *France Must Know*. No-go zones in France, he wrote, are now foreign enclaves on French territory. “The gangs operating there,” he noted, “have formed a parallel economy based on drug trafficking.... They consider themselves at war with France and with Western civilization. They act in cooperation with Islamist organizations, and define acts of predation and rampage as raids against infidels.”

Anouar concluded that reclaiming these areas today would be complicated, costly, and involve calling in the army.

So as a result, the cowardly French government turns a blind eye to the problem. Moreover, not only will pandemic-caused economic distress exacerbate the situation, but, Millière states, that no-go zones’ exclusion from lockdown measures reveals the situation: It’s a tacit admission they’re no longer part of the French republic.



Pomogayev/Stock/GettyImagesPlus

Illegal Aliens Likely to Receive Mail-in Ballots in California

It is nearly certain that illegal immigrants in California will receive mail-in ballots to vote in the 2020 presidential election thanks to the state’s lackadaisical voter-registration system and Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom’s May 8 executive order allowing all voters in the state to vote via mail-in ballot this November because of the Chinese coronavirus.

Government Accountability Institute Research Director Eric Eggers laid out the reasons for this voting plan in a May 13 interview with Breitbart. Eggers is the author of *Fraud: How the Left Plans to Steal the Next Election*. “California is famous for having flawed and bloated voter rolls, unfortunately California is not the only state in the country to do so, but maybe they do it better than anyone else,” Eggers said.

California already allows ballot harvesting, wherein political operatives collect ballots at places such as nursing homes and deliver them to polling places with virtually no oversight. It is also a state with more registered voters than residents who are eligible to vote. Newsom’s vote-by-mail order only exacerbates voter fraud in the Golden State.

Coincidentally, while Newsom looks to suspend in-person voting for the 2020 election because of concerns over the coronavirus, such ballot harvesting requires political operatives to go places and physically interact with people who are in the high-risk category for coronavirus.

The idea that illegal immigrants will be mailed ballots willy-nilly is even more galling.

“This is really where the left shows a level of hypocrisy, which they’re not regularly held to account,” Eggers said. “What if the ballots go to illegal immigrants that willingly or unwillingly ended up on the voter rolls and maybe they just don’t even know they’re not supposed to be casting ballots? Because remember, elsewhere in California and elsewhere nationally, it is legal for non-citizens to vote in certain elections.”

California is a state with so-called automatic voter registration, which is connected to driver’s licensing. Illegal immigrants are allowed to have driver’s licenses in the state.



BillOxford/Stock/GettyImagesPlus

Climate Alarmists Blame Global Warming for Record Cold May

Almost a full two months after the season officially ended, winter reared its ugly head in much of the United States in early May. A winter-type Polar Vortex has caused record cold and extremely late season snow from the Rockies to the Atlantic Ocean. What's responsible for this late-season cold? If you listen to climate alarmists, the answer is simple: global warming.

As counterintuitive as it may sound, many in the climate-alarmist movement have claimed for years that extreme cold may be one result of anthropogenic global warming. The theory goes

that increased temperature at high altitudes in the Arctic — due to man-made global warming — is causing the the circumpolar vortex to split more easily, which allows lobes of Arctic air to make their way south, where they affect the United States with unusually cold weather.

Jennifer Francis of the Woods Hole Research Center, a climate-change think tank, addressed the extreme cold in 2019 being the result of warming. “This symptom of global warming is counter-intuitive for those in the cross-hairs of these extreme cold spells,” Francis said. “But these events provide an excellent opportunity to help the public understand some of the ‘interesting’ ways that climate change will unfold.”

In climate science, researchers begin with a conclusion that they are not allowed to revise. All findings must lead to the interpretation that humans are causing a warmer planet owing to their use of fossil fuels and the accompanying release of carbon dioxide. No other conclusion can be considered. This is the result of mixing science with a political agenda. Like anything mixed with politics, the science becomes corrupted by it.

Because of that political and globalist influence, any other possible reason for unusual weather — the sun, the ocean, the clouds, the orbital variations of the Earth — is dismissed. Climate change and extreme weather must be caused by human activity or the political movement would grind to a halt.



tommaso79/istock/Getty ImagesPlus

UN Human Rights Chief Tries to Scare Countries Into Lockdowns

The UN high commissioner for human rights is suggesting that the draconian lockdowns most countries have enforced on their citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic might need to be extended to avoid a disastrous “second wave” of the virus.

Human rights chief Michelle Bachelet, a socialist and the former president of Chile, issued the warning on May 14. Bachelet claimed that the disastrous economic effects of the COVID-19 lockdowns are a small price to pay when you consider the possible alternative.

“If an affected country comes out of lock-down too hastily, there is a danger that a second wave, costing many more lives, will be triggered sooner and more destructively than would otherwise be the case,” Bachelet said.

“If the reopening of societies is mishandled, all the huge sacrifices made during the initial #lockdown will have been for nothing. Letting politics or economics drive the #COVID-19 response at the expense of health and #HumanRights will cost lives.”

Bachelet, who was trained as a physician, suggested that plans to reopen economies are being driven by a “particular elite” and that the predicted disastrous results of reopening too soon will fall hardest on “vulnerable” people.

“If their response is based on the interests of a particular elite — causing the disease to flare up again in other less privileged or marginalized communities — it will rebound on everyone,” Bachelet told reporters in Geneva.

Bachelet must not watch much television or go on the Internet.

In America, at least, reopenings are clearly being driven by unhappy citizens who want to go back to work and start their lives again — not by any “elites.” In fact, it seems as though many elites — globalist health organizations, Democrat-controlled states, and the mainstream media, for example — are the ones pressing to continue these authoritarian lockdowns.

The elites have done their job in frightening the peoples of the world. They’ve told us all the risks and the precautions we should take. Now, they should allow us to decide whether to take those risks. ■



AP Images

Salon Owner Refuses to Apologize for Opening Her Business

“I have to disagree with you, sir, when you say that I’m selfish because feeding my kids is not selfish. I have hair stylists that are going hungry because they’d rather feed their kids. So, sir, if you think the law is more important than kids getting fed, then please go ahead with your decision. But I’m not going to shut the salon.”

A judge told Shelley Luther she could avoid jail time if she admitted she was wrong and agreed to close her A La Mode beauty parlor until state officials said it was allowed to open. Sentenced to seven days in jail, she was freed after one day amid strong public outcry.



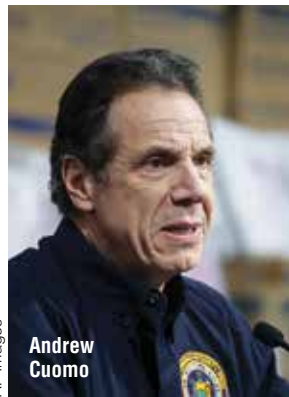
Shelley Luther

AP Images

President’s New Press Secretary Described as “Pugnacious”

“Leave it to the media to irresponsibly take President Trump out of context and run with negative headlines. Millions of Americans tune in each day to hear directly from President Trump and appreciate his leadership, unprecedented coronavirus response, and confident outlook for America’s future.”

It didn’t take long for the New York Times to employ a less-than-laudatory adjective — pugnacious — to describe the president’s new press secretary, Kayleigh McEnany. Her unwillingness to tolerate unflattering descriptions of her boss’s efforts has certainly pleased Donald Trump.



Andrew Cuomo

AP Images

New York Governor Praises President for Defunding WHO

“Whose job is it to warn us about these global pandemics? The President says it’s the World Health Organization and that why he’s taken action against them. It’s not my field but he’s right to ask the question because the WHO was too little, too late.”

Angering some fellow Democrats because he supported President Trump’s decision to cease funding WHO, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo agreed with the criticism of the UN agency.

Abortion a Defining Issue With a Growing Number of Young Voters

“I’m of the firm belief that you can’t be pro-life and vote Democratic. I’m not pro-Trump. Yet I will vote Republican because I will not vote Democrat.”

Interviews with college-age Republicans indicate that many aren’t overwhelmingly conservative. But in a development that should please abortion opponents, they voice a hard anti-abortion stance. Recent Ohio State graduate Autumn Crawford is a typical example of those who consider opposition to abortion a key issue.

Special Election Sends Republican to Congress, a Rare Victory for the GOP in California

“It’s clear that our message of lower taxes and ensuring that we don’t take liberal Sacramento dysfunction to Washington prevailed. For too long, the people of our district have not had decent representation. It’s time their voice is heard in Washington.”

Since 1998, there has been no recovery of a congressional seat from a Democrat in California. But on May 12, voters in one of the southern California districts switched from Democratic to Republican. Former military pilot and political newcomer Mike Garcia will have to run again in November against the Democrat he beat.

Wisconsin Ends Stay-at-home Mandate

“Isn’t it the very definition of tyranny for one person to order people to be imprisoned for going to work, among other ordinarily lawful activities?”

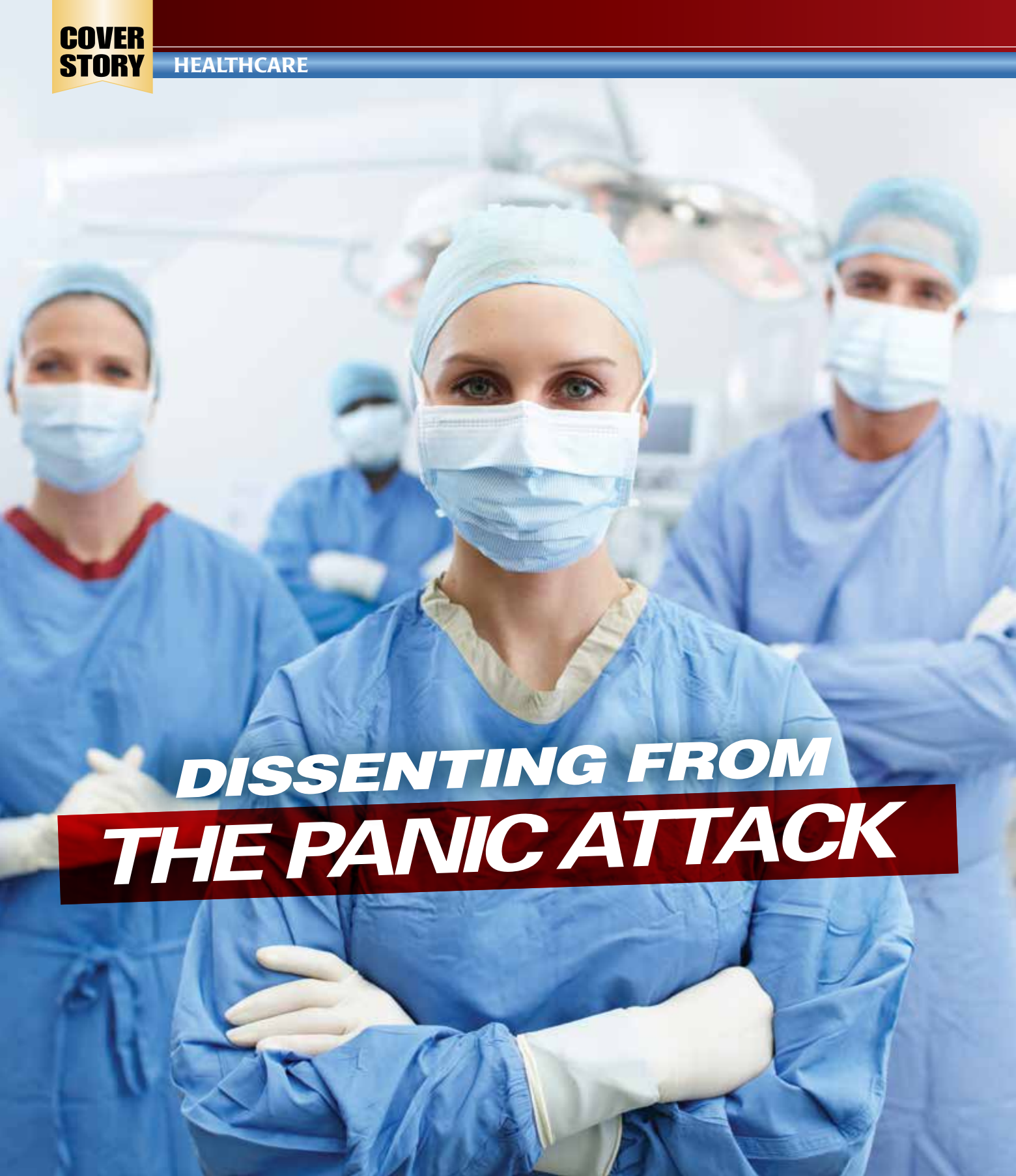
During a hearing about the legality of the mandate, state Judge Rebecca Bradley quizzed the lawyer for the state’s senior health official. Her clear thinking helped to sway colleagues on the bench, who voided the arbitrary rule and opened up local businesses. ■

— COMPILED BY JOHN F. MCMANUS



Rebecca Bradley

AP Images



**DISSENTING FROM
THE PANIC ATTACK**

A growing body of scientists and medical professionals is beginning to dissent from the mainstream fearmongering over the coronavirus.

by Dennis Behreandt

Tyranny thrives on fear, and fear is usually based in large part on ignorance. We fear the things we don't understand and the things we can't see. When it comes to the current pandemic, we can't see the pathogen, and, generally, most people don't understand it. Moreover, most people don't understand how a normal human immune system works and responds to a bacterial or viral invader. Because of this fear and lack of knowledge, opportunistic politicians have seized on the chance to impose ever more ridiculous restrictions on human activity. And because people are afraid of what they don't understand, a compliant populace has rolled over to the imposition of authoritarian rule. Safety at all cost, from the phantom pathogen, is being used to wage war on the rights of the people.

Facts and understanding are the vaccines that are needed to fight off the virus of totalitarianism that is now infecting the world. While the mainstream media push their fear agenda, and tech giants such as Google (owner of YouTube), Twitter, and others block posts offering criticism of the coronavirus tyranny agenda, sensible information about aspects of the pandemic remain available if one knows where to look. And courageous doctors and other professionals, and a large and growing number of citizens, increasingly offer dissenting views critical of the mainstream narrative.

An Alternative Medical View From California

A devastating recitation of facts is just what has been provided by two doctors from California in pair of videos, one of which has been censored by YouTube after having received 5.46 million views.

Drs. Daniel W. Erickson and Artin Massihi are co-owners of Accelerated Urgent Care in Bakersfield, California. Combined, they have more than 40 years of hands-on experience in providing medical care and in treating viral infections and respiratory illnesses. Today, their company is a primary provider of tests for COVID-19 in

Dennis Behreandt works in the chemical technology industry, and has served as an editor for several publications, including THE NEW AMERICAN.

According to Dr. Erickson, first of all, the models that predicted doomsday scenarios and were used as justification by political figures for the lockdowns have proven wildly inaccurate.



Examining the evidence: Drs. Daniel W. Erickson (left) and Artin Massihi posted a video detailing the knowledge they gained in testing for COVID-19 in their clinics. Their information called into question the mainstream narrative of the disease, and was censored on YouTube as a result.

their county, having performed several thousand such tests. In a lengthy “briefing” interview with the local ABC television affiliate channel 23 on April 22, they provide the facts and data that demonstrate that the lockdowns are not needed and may, in fact, be counterproductive.

According to Dr. Erickson, first of all, the models that predicted doomsday scenarios and were used as justification by political figures for the lockdowns have proven wildly inaccurate. Actual data prove that the infection is very widespread, making death rates considerably lower than predicted by the models preferred by public health politicians and bureaucrats.

“What is materializing in the state of California is 12 percent positives,” notes Dr. Erickson. We have 39.5 million people. If we just take a basic calculation and extrapolate that out, that equates to about 4.7 million cases throughout the state of California, which means this thing is

widespread. That’s the good news. We’ve seen 1,227 deaths in the state of California with a possible incidence or prevalence of 4.7 million; that means you have a 0.03 chance of dying from COVID-19 in the state of California.”

That’s a low number, Dr. Erickson notes. And it’s the same thing elsewhere. “The more you test, the more positives you get, the prevalence number goes up, and the death rate stays the same, so it gets smaller and smaller and smaller,” he remarks. “And as we move through this data what I want you to see is millions of cases, small amount of death. Millions of cases, small amount of death, and you will see that in every state.”

Critics argue that this outcome is due solely to the role of mitigation, of social distancing, of masks, and of the lockdowns in general. But, Erickson notes, we have data that call that conclusion into question.

The data come from a comparison of

outcomes in Sweden, which did not lock down the country, and next-door Norway, which did institute lockdown measures. Comparing these two Scandinavian nations, Dr. Erickson noted:

When you bring up a system of lockdown you automatically have to compare it to a system of no lockdown. Sweden and Norway.... Norway has lockdown, Sweden does not have lockdown. What happened in those two countries? Are they vastly different? Did Sweden have a massive outbreak of cases? Did Norway have nothing? Let's look at the numbers.

Sweden. Sweden has 15,322 cases of COVID. They did 74,600 tests,

which is 21 percent, similar to the other countries, 21 percent of all those tested came up positive for COVID. What's the population of Sweden? About 10.4 million. So if we extrapolate out the data, about 2 million cases of COVID in Sweden. They did a little bit of social distancing, they would wear masks and separate, they went to schools, stores were open, they were almost about their normal daily life with a little bit of social distancing. They had how many deaths? 1,765. California has had 1,220 with isolation. No isolation: 1,765. We have more people — what I'm getting at is millions of cases, very small death. Millions of

cases, very small death. This is what we're seeing everywhere.

Norway, its [Sweden's] next door neighbor, this is where I come from. These are two Scandinavian nations, we can compare them as they are similar. Let's look at the data. Norway: 7,191 cases of COVID. Total COVID tests: 145,279. So they came up with 4.9 percent of all COVID tests were positive in Norway. Population of Norway: 5.4 million. So if we extrapolate the data as we have been doing, which is the best we can do at this point, they have about 1.3 million cases. Now, their deaths as a total number were 182, fairly small, but statistically insignificant from 1,700, you realize. Millions of cases, small amount of death. 1,700 [or] 100, these are statistically insignificant. So you have a .003 chance of death as a citizen of Norway, and a 97 percent recovery. Their numbers are a little bit better. Does it necessitate shut down, loss of jobs, destruction of the oil company, furloughing doctors? That's the question I have for you.



The Swedish experience: Famously, Sweden did not follow the global trend of lockdown in response to the virus. Nonetheless, outcomes in Sweden are comparable with those attained in lockdown nations, calling into question the wisdom of mass lockdown strategies.

For their part, Drs. Erickson and Massihi point out that the lockdowns, by keeping people inside and away from more biologically complex environments, may reduce the immune system's effectiveness.

In this analysis, Drs. Erickson and Massihi are not alone. Other health professionals and researchers, too, are questioning the necessity of the lockdowns and the wisdom of the authoritarian response. These include Dr. Knut Wittkowski, former head of Rockefeller University's Department of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design; Dr. David L. Katz, former president of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine; and Professor Johan Giesecke, an epidemiologist who was first chief scientist of the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control.

Aspects of the Immune System

Intriguingly, Erickson and Massihi go further, arguing, as did Dr. Wittkowski, that the lockdowns will be counterproductive. Why this might be so is related to how the immune system functions.

Like much of biology, human physiology is wonderfully complex, and the immune system, considered on its own, is a marvel of biochemical engineering. Elaine N. Marieb in her text *Human Anatomy and Physiology* describes the immune system as a marvel "which stalks and eliminates

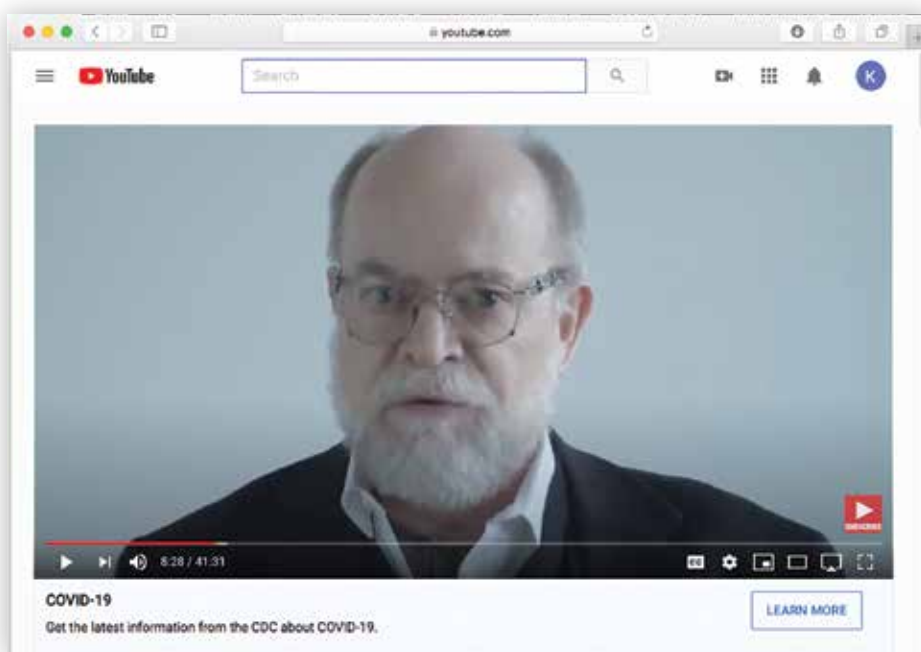
with nearly equal precision almost any type of pathogen that intrudes the body.” While the immune system has mechanisms for general defense, ultimately it works to best effect only when it has learned what it must fight. The immune system “must ‘meet’ or be primed by an initial exposure to a foreign substance (antigen) *before* it can protect the body against that substance,” Marieb writes.

One way it does this, where viruses are concerned, is through the production and release of proteins that help cells defend themselves against viral invasion. Regarding this aspect of immunity, Marieb writes:

Viruses — essentially, nucleic acids surrounded by a protein coat — lack the cellular machinery to generate ATP [adenosine triphosphate, a molecule with a key role in powering cell activity] or synthesize proteins. They do their “dirty work” or damage in the body by invading tissue cells and taking over the cellular metabolic machinery needed to reproduce themselves. Although the virus-infected cells can do little to save themselves, they can help defend cells that have not yet been infected by secreting small proteins called interferons. The interferon molecules diffuse to nearby cells, where they stimulate synthesis of other proteins, which then inhibit, or “interfere” with, viral replication in those cells. Interferon’s protection is not *virus-specific* (i.e., interferon produced against a particular virus protects against a variety of other viruses.)

Thus, exposure to viruses in the environment tends to make the human immune system more effective against other viruses. This lesser-known response to viruses helps the body’s immune system as it prepares a defense against specific pathogens. This latter response provides adaptive protection against specific invaders and, as the body has learned what those invaders are, provides longer-term immunity against them. Collectively, when this happens among many people in the wider population it creates what is known as “herd immunity,” a key element in bringing an end to an epidemic.

For their part, Drs. Erickson and Mas-sihi point out that the lockdowns, by keep-



Knut Wittkowski: The former head of Rockefeller University’s Department of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design, Professor Wittkowski has dissented from the mainstream approach to the pandemic. Videos featuring interviews with Wittkowski have faced censorship.

ing people inside and away from more biologically complex environments, may reduce the immune system’s effectiveness because of reduced exposure to pathogens that may stimulate immune activity. “The immune system is built by exposure to antigens: viruses, bacteria,” noted Dr. Erickson, who elaborated:

When you are a little child crawling on the ground putting stuff in your mouth, viruses and bacteria come in, you form an antigen antibody complex.... This is how your immune system is built. You don’t take a small child, put them in bubble wrap in a room and say, “Go have a healthy immune system.” This is immunology, microbiology 101. This is the basis of what we’ve known for years. When you take human beings and you say, go into your house, clean all your counters, Lysol them down. You’re going to kill 99 percent of viruses and bacteria. Wear a mask. Don’t go outside. What does that do to our immune system? Our immune system is used to touching. We share bacteria, staphylococcal, streptococcal bacterium, viruses, we develop

an immune response daily to this stuff. When you take that away from me my immune system drops. As I shelter in place, my immune system drops. You keep me there for months, it drops more. And now I’m at home hand washing vigorously, washing the counters, worried about things that are indeed what I need to survive. Let’s follow the science. This is immunology, folks. This is microbiology. This is what we’ve combined together, we have 40 years of experience in this. This is common sense immunology.

The opinions of these doctors, of course, is a direct challenge to the prevailing coronavirus orthodoxy. So it is no surprise that the statist guardians of that orthodoxy have reacted, criticizing the doctors from one direction, while silencing them from another.

The criticism has come from two physician groups, the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) and the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). In a statement, the two groups said they “jointly and emphatically condemn” the opinions of Drs. Erickson and Massihi. “These reckless and untested

musings do not speak for medical society and are inconsistent with current science and epidemiology regarding COVID-19,” the organizations said.

As the two medical groups were announcing their criticisms of the doctors, YouTube decided to censor them altogether, in a move that will surprise no one. According to ABC 23, the news channel that interviewed the doctors, “YouTube pulled a 23ABC video recording of Drs. Erickson and Massihi speaking. The video was one of two part[s] of the press conference uploaded to YouTube.”

The station concluded noting that they had asked YouTube to reconsider its censorship of the doctors. “23ABC has appealed to YouTube to have the video re-uploaded,” the station said.

According to Atlas, who has taught at Stanford University Medical Center and is regularly named by his peers as one of the best doctors in America, isolation policies prevent the achievement of population immunity, prolonging the pandemic.

More Medical Dissent

It’s not just Drs. Erickson and Massihi who are doubting the lockdowns. In a powerful op-ed for *The Hill* in April, Dr. Scott W. Atlas also noted that the lockdowns will prevent a resolution to the pandemic.

According to Atlas, who has taught at Stanford University Medical Center and is regularly named by his peers as one of the best doctors in America, isolation policies prevent the achievement of population immunity, prolonging the pandemic.

“We know from decades of medical science that infection itself allows people to generate an immune response — antibodies — so that the infection is controlled throughout the population by ‘herd immunity,’” Atlas writes. “Indeed, that is the main purpose of widespread immunization

in other viral diseases — to assist with population immunity. In this virus, we know that medical care is not even necessary for the vast majority of people who are infected. It is so mild that half of infected people are asymptomatic, shown in early data from the *Diamond Princess* ship, and then in Iceland and Italy. That has been falsely portrayed as a problem requiring mass isolation. In fact, infected people without severe illness are the immediately available vehicle for establishing widespread immunity. By transmitting the virus to others in the low-risk group who then generate antibodies, they block the network of pathways toward the most vulnerable people, ultimately ending the threat.”

Writing in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B - Biological Sciences* in 2006, researchers with Pennsylvania State University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the Santa Fe Institute provided a simple summary of the concept of herd immunity.

“Pathogen dynamics ... fundamentally depend on the structure of the underlying contact network as moulded by patterns of individual immunization through vaccination or prior exposure to disease,” they wrote. Then they pointed out that not everyone in a population needs to acquire immunity for overall herd immunity to be achieved.

“Immunized individuals are effectively removed from the network, thereby breaking possible chains of transmission and leaving a sparser residual network. An important principle in epidemiology is that an entire population can be protected by the immunization of a fraction of the hosts, the so-called herd immunity.”

The important conclusions from this piece are two: Either exposure to disease pathogens or vaccination can lead to herd immunity, and not every person in society needs immunity for herd immunity to be achieved overall. But the research has other implications as well. It turns out that the effectiveness of herd immunity depends on the nature of the social network involved. On a small scale, in what is termed “small-world” networks (think the “six degrees of separation” idea), vaccination is the most effective means of achieving widespread immunity. But the researchers found that in large-scale, more complex networks, the opposite was



mustafaquill/E+/GettyImagesPlus

Strong immune system: “The immune system is built by exposure to antigens: viruses, bacteria,” says Dr. Daniel Erickson. “You don’t take a small child, put them in bubble wrap in a room and say, ‘go have a healthy immune system.’ This is immunology, microbiology 101.”



AP Images

Protect the vulnerable: A woman looks through the window of a nursing home in Kirkland, Washington. The nation's older population is most at risk, yet bureaucratic policies have led to greater exposure for the vulnerable. In total, state government policies have done much to maximize harm across society, rather than minimize it.

true. Natural exposure in large, complex networks resulted, they discovered, “in residual networks, which are robust to secondary epidemics than randomly vaccinated networks.”

In such a large network, then, it might be a bad idea to hinder the spread of a disease that has a very low death rate, as doing so may prolong the epidemic while leaving the population more susceptible to subsequent waves of the disease.

In a video interview with Journeyman Pictures on April 24, Dr. Knut Wittkowski argued that the chief effect on public health of the lockdowns is to have prolonged the impact of the contagion. “The virus is still around,” he noted. “So, we still have to isolate the elderly. We are no better off, so the time that has passed is wasted. We still ... have to do more because the epidemic that is coming now will be not so high but wider, so the time the elderly in the nursing homes have to be isolated will be more than it otherwise would have been.”

And so far, he said, the lockdowns have been nothing short of a catastrophe. “To isolate those who are not at risk and put those at risk who are at risk is a catastrophe,” he said. “It’s a human catastrophe that should never ever have happened.”

As to whether or not we need a vaccine

to end the lockdowns and the pandemic, Wittkowski offered an emphatic “No.”

“We don’t need a vaccine to get out of it. Sorry for Bill Gates, but we don’t need a vaccine,” he said. “It is nice to have it in case this virus should come back again and if we then have a vaccine that will be nice. Do we need it right now? No. We don’t need a vaccine because we see already herd immunity developing and in two or three weeks, or maybe already now, we have herd immunity and it’s over.”

Another doctor who is skeptical of the lockdowns is Dr. Donald W. Miller, who, according to his biography, is a veteran medical professional whose 40-year career includes being “former Chief, Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of Washington School of Medicine.”

In an essay for LewRockwell.com on April 30, Dr. Miller argued: “A more unrestricted approach is better” than the tyranny of lockdowns. “While shielding vulnerable senior citizens,” Miller continued, “younger people who have a negligible Covid mortality risk should be able to go to work, to restaurants and bars (and church), like in Sweden. People there do go to work, cafes and restaurants are open, and its parks full. The country remains open for business.”

Moreover, like other doctors skeptical of the way the establishment has handled the pandemic, Dr. Miller observed: “Covid-infected people who have mild illness help establish widespread immunity against subsequent and possibly more virulent waves of the infection.”

Treatment Practices Questioned

Some medical professionals, too, have begun to wonder if some treatment practices for COVID-19 are correct. An early hint of dissent from prevailing practices, which include placing some patients on ventilators for many days in an attempt to force oxygen into their lungs, came from Dr. Cameron Kyle-Sidell.

An ER and critical care doctor, Kyle-Sidell posted a video to YouTube in early April that questioned the current practice of using high-pressure ventilators for COVID-19 patients. “We are putting breathing tubes in people and putting them on ventilators and dialing up the pressure to open their lungs,” Kyle-Sidell said in his video. “I’ve talked to doctors all around the country and it’s becoming increasingly clear that the pressure we’re providing may be hurting their lungs. That it is highly likely that the high pressures we are using are damaging the lungs of the patients we are putting the breathing tubes in.”

As for what course of treatment should be followed, Kyle-Sidell offered this opinion: “COVID-positive patients need oxygen, they do not need pressure. They will need ventilators but they must be programmed differently. The protocols in this country, in every small, big, medium sized hospital in this country must change.”

Dr. Mike Hansen, a specialist in internal medicine, pulmonary disease, and critical care medicine, also posted a video at the beginning of April discussing the use of ventilators for COVID-19 patients who had developed acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). In the video, Dr. Hansen provided a thorough overview of ARDS and ventilator practices, but concluded by noting that “ventilators are not a cure for COVID-19.” Instead, he pointed out, “A ventilator is a form of life support, which sometimes helps patients with COVID-19 survive.”

How often does putting a COVID-19 patient on a ventilator lead to survival? According to Dr. Hansen, “Based on a re-

cent study that came out only a few weeks ago, only 14 percent of people who have COVID-19 who require a breathing tube end up surviving. So COVID-19 patients who end up getting ARDS in the intensive care unit who need to get a breathing tube, only 14 percent of them end up surviving.”

Seemingly, then, if COVID-19 patients are arriving at medical facilities with onset of ARDS symptoms, and as a result are needing to be put on a ventilator, and this results in poor outcomes and a high percentage of fatalities, then patients seem to be getting to the hospital too late.

The toll this takes on patients and on healthcare professionals is significant. A clearly distraught nurse working in New York City hospitals took to social media with a video describing the plight of patients she was seeing. In a video that has been viewed over one million times on YouTube as of May 18, 2020, Nicole Sirotek tearfully lamented that “gross negligence and complete medical mismanagement” were causing patients to die, especially in the cases of minorities. When she tried to speak up for her struggling patients, she said, officials reassigned her elsewhere.

“They don’t care what’s happening to these people. And I just have to keep watching them die,” she cried. Her message to the sick: “Stay out of New York City for your health care,” she said. “They don’t care what is happening to these people.”

Medical news website Stat reported on the evolution in COVID-19 treatment on April 8. “Even as hospitals and governors raise the alarm about a shortage of ventilators, some critical care physicians are questioning the widespread use of the breathing machines for Covid-19 patients, saying that large numbers of patients could instead be treated with less intensive respiratory support,” Stat reported.

Stat noted that researchers in Germany and Italy had sent a letter to the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* that explained their experience with COVID-19 patients and ventilators. According to Stat, the researchers “said their Covid-19 patients were unlike any others with acute respiratory distress. Their lungs are relatively elastic (‘compliant’), a sign of health ‘in sharp contrast to expectations for severe ARDS.’ Their low blood oxygen might result from things that ventilators don’t fix. Such patients

need ‘the lowest possible [air pressure] and gentle ventilation,’ they said, arguing against increasing the pressure even if blood oxygen levels remain low.”

At the end of April Dr. Richard Levitan, an airway specialist in New Hampshire who volunteered for a time treating COVID-19 patients in New York City, spoke to *PBS NewsHour Weekend* anchor Hari Sreenivasan for the Amanpour & Co. program on PBS. Dr. Levitan discussed the need for medical professionals to urge those with COVID-19 symptoms to seek medical help earlier so that they could be treated in ways that would avoid the use of ventilators.

“I am proposing a radically different view” than current CDC guidelines, Dr. Levitan said. “What they are telling people is go to the emergency department if your fingers or your lips turn blue. And what I am saying is, I think if we move this window of presentation, if we educate patients to come in earlier, if we can do point-of-care testing in the ER and know, ok, you have COVID, and then we monitor their oxygen, we can make a dramatic difference.”

Dr. Leviton pointed out that in one situation in Italy, doctors sent people with early symptoms of COVID-19 home with consumer-grade pulse-oximeter devices to measure blood oxygen levels. Noting that this course of action had very positive outcomes, he proposed adopting similar practices in the United States.

“If we move this whole management of this disease to earlier identification of who has it, better pulse oximetry monitoring in COVID-positive patients as well as those at greatest risk for serious illness, I think we can dramatically influence how this country faces this problem.”

Echoing Dr. Kyle-Sidell, Dr. Levitan noted that COVID-19 pneumonia resulted in oxygen deprivation, not unlike what is experienced by mountain climbers. As such, early in the pandemic, patients with these symptoms weren’t treated accordingly.

“What happened early in this pandemic is the belief that, well, ‘they’re about to die, let’s put them on a ventilator.’ And what we realized, and in hindsight is now better understood, they got there slowly, we can correct their oxygenation, and if



Ventilator questions: “It’s becoming increasingly clear that the [ventilator] pressure we’re providing may be hurting their lungs,” said Dr. Cameron Kyle-Sidell in a video he posted discussing his views on treatment for COVID patients.



AP Images

Live free: Protests in many state capitals have seen Americans, who've been made desperate by dictatorial decrees from their governors, turn out to demand that their natural rights and freedoms be respected. The Founding Fathers, many have noted, did not include a "pandemic exception" in the Bill of Rights.

we keep careful monitoring on them and decrease the work of breathing, improve their oxygen and keep them off the vent, it's actually better."

Moreover, not mentioned by the mainstream media, doctors are developing new, effective treatment protocols. In testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Government Affairs in early May, Dr. Pierre Kory of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine described an anti-inflammatory treatment protocol he and several cooperating doctors had developed and used with success in treating COVID-19 patients. Called the MATH+ protocol, it includes treatment with intravenous methylprednisolone, high-dose intravenous vitamin C, full-dose low molecular weight Heparin (an anticoagulant) and optional treatments with thiamine, zinc, and vitamin D.

How well does this treatment protocol work? In his testimony, Dr. Kory described the results he was seeing. "Members of our group have now treated in excess of 100 hospitalized patients with our treatment protocol," Dr. Kory noted. "Nearly all survived. The two that died were in their eighties and had advanced chronic medical conditions. None of the patients have had long stays on the ventilator nor become ventilator dependent. The patients

generally have a short hospital stay and are discharged in good health."

End the Panic, End the Lockdowns

From the high-level view of public health to the smaller scale of the emergency room, there is growing disagreement with the mainstream view of how the pandemic should be managed. For the disease, doctors are now trying alternatives to ventilators, including earlier treatment, treatment with promising medications such as hydroxychloroquine and others, and more, while at the scale of population-level public health, important experts and doctors are growing more concerned about the imposition of lockdowns, not only as an affront to liberty, but even as a poor choice for dealing with the spread of the disease.

Clearly and movingly emotional, Dr. Wittkowski ended his April 24 interview with a powerful appeal for a return to normalcy. The lockdown, he said, is "ridiculous."

What we should do immediately, now that we

know that we already have developed herd immunity, despite social distancing, at least to some level, that we have immunity, in a quite relevant portion of the population, we should open schools and businesses yesterday at the latest. There is no reason whatsoever to wait. The worst thing that could happen is, we get a bit of a rebound, that will not be catastrophic, that will not overload the hospitals, it will be less than we had so far. That could happen. But everything else that we do is a lot worse than what could happen if we let's say have another 10-20,000 cases.... It's not the end of the world. We should go back to be a strong economy, to work, to have a social life, to let children be educated, do everything our society should do, and that lockdown is, there is no benefit, there is only negative effects.

We are only beginning to see the economic devastation of unemployment. We are beginning to see stress on food supplies, and famine next winter, if freedom is not restored, is a very real possibility. We are also beginning to see signs of increase in suicides, and we have little understanding of how many deaths may have been hastened by the precipitous drop in patients seeking or receiving timely treatment for dangerous diseases, including heart disease, cancer, and others. And these are just a few of the innumerable ill effects of the liberal-progressive policy of social control via lockdown.

The course of treatment being imposed by a few tyrannical technocrats from the top down, without the consent of the governed, is indeed far, far worse than the disease.

If we expect not only to survive this engineered debacle, but to thrive in the future, then only one answer is possible.

Freedom is the cure. ■



EXTRA COPIES AVAILABLE

◆ Additional copies of this issue of THE NEW AMERICAN are available at quantity-discount prices. To place your order, visit www.shopjbs.org or see the card between pages 34-35.

Should I Wear A FACE MASK?



AP Images

It has been dubbed patriotic and caring to wear a face mask during the pandemic, but not only can face masks be ineffective, they can help transmit the virus and worsen its effect.

by **Cathy A. Spigarelli**

Awkward. This is how it feels to be in public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some faces are masked; others are not. This polarity has led the public to judgment, anger, and hostile interaction. We all want to do the right thing and stop the spread of disease, but is a face mask really protecting you and those around you? We have all wondered, “Should I wear a face mask?”

As an environmental, health, and safe-

Cathy A. Spigarelli, MS, CHMM, is a corporate environmental health and safety manager for a chemical company. She has degrees in metallurgical engineering/materials science (BS), pharmacology & toxicology (MS), and EHS/environmental management (MS).

ty manager responsible for respiratory protection, I understand that face masks can play a supportive role in protecting the wearer from airborne hazards *if* the proper mask is chosen under the right circumstances. I also know that face masks *can be* ineffective, *can* create new hazards, and *should not be* the first or only line of defense. Face masks should be relegated to those in an industrial, emergency services, or healthcare work setting where proper mask selection, training, fit testing, and mask inadequacies can be addressed. The general public, in community settings, should not be wearing face masks to lessen viral transmission, as the data and potential drawbacks do not support their use. Instead, the focus should be on the more-effective

ways you can protect yourself and those around you.

Face Mask Basics

Face masks can be used as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect the wearer or used as Source Control to protect those around an infected wearer. But critical to a mask’s performance is filter efficiency and fit. Filter efficiency is the ability to capture contaminants. Design and materials of construction determine filter efficiency. A tight fit is also critical, preventing air leakage out of the mask. Both are necessary for high-level protection.

The most common masks worn are cloth face masks, surgical masks, and N-95 respirators. However, these masks are not all created equal.

A **cloth face mask** is loose-fitting and made from a variety of materials; it has limited filter efficiency, doesn't adhere to any design or filter efficiency standard, and lacks a test standard that confirms performance.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended that the public wear cloth face masks as a form of Source Control and has encouraged the public to make their own masks. And some are wearing cloth masks mistakenly thinking that they will protect them from disease.

Homemade and commercial cloth masks are being worn by the public. The materials of construction vary greatly, which directly impacts their effectiveness. In a 2010 study funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a range of potential cloth mask fabrics (t-shirt, sweatshirt, towel, scarf, and commercial cloth mask) were tested for filter efficiency. The study found, "The use of fabric materials may provide only minimal levels of respiratory protection to a wearer against virus-size submicron aerosol particles (e.g. droplet nuclei). This is partly because fabric materials show only marginal filtration performance against virus-size particles when sealed around the edges. Face seal leakage will further decrease the respiratory protection offered by fabric materials."

Couple the inadequate filter efficiency with the unstructured, loose fit of these

masks, and it should be no surprise that studies have found cloth masks are not effective. In a 2015 study by MacIntyre, et al., they concluded, "In the interest of providing safe, low-cost options in low income countries, there is scope for research into more effectively designed cloth masks, but until such research is carried out, cloth masks should not be recommended." Also, in a commentary entitled "Masks-For-All For CoVID-19 Not Based on Sound Data," the authors concluded, "Our review of relevant studies indicates that cloth masks will be ineffective at preventing SARS-CoV-2 transmission, whether worn as source control or as PPE."

Cloth face masks are not a form of respiratory protection and should be thought of as merely symbolic, giving the appearance of doing "something."

Surgical masks also are loose-fitting masks, ones designed to trap airborne droplets emitted from the mouth or nose of the wearer, preventing *droplets* from being expelled into the surrounding space. Although regulated by the FDA, surgical masks are not required to form a seal with the face, nor do they have a minimum level of performance to meet.

Surgical masks were initially designed for Source Control to decrease the spread of bacteria or virus from an infected wearer to a vulnerable patient (think open wounds). These were not designed to pro-

tect the wearer from disease, and there is much evidence that they do not.

Surgical mask efficacy varies widely. Experimental results are mixed and vary with mask type and manufacturer, experimental setting (clinical, household, lab), and type of disease assessed. So the ability of a surgical mask to function as Source Control is variable. That said, in a recent review by the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, it was concluded: "These data suggest that surgical masks worn by the public will have no or very low impact on disease transmission during a pandemic." This makes sense since, even if the coronavirus is expelled from the body in larger droplets of water that should be caught by the mask, these masks are not fitted and air takes the path of least resistance, so basically through the unsealed edges and openings of the mask.

As PPE, many studies have confirmed that surgical masks do not prevent inhalation of particles due to poor facial fit and limited filtration characteristics. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety states that the filter material of surgical masks does not retain or filter out submicron particles and is not designed to eliminate air leakage around the edges. A 2008 study by Tara Oberg, M.S., and Lisa M. Brosseau, S.D., concluded, after testing several surgical masks, "None of these surgical masks exhibited adequate filter performance and facial fit characteristics to be considered respiratory protection devices."

N-95 respirators have a tight-fitting design and are engineered to protect the wearer by removing 95 percent of particles, at least .3 microns and greater, from the air moving through it. They are of intricate design, are capable of high filter efficiency, and remove a wide range of particle sizes. N-95 respirators conform to the NIOSH 42 CFR 84 performance standard, and fit testing is required to ensure a protective fit.

The N-95 respirator was designed to function as PPE. A 2006 study by Anna Balazy, et al., published by the *American*

Actually protective, but not fully: If it's fitted to the face, an N-95 face respirator, made of woven polypropylene, could provide a functional barrier to illness.



AP Images

Cloth face masks are not a form of respiratory protection and should be thought of as merely symbolic, giving the appearance of doing “something.”



What’s the point? The untrained public struggles to wear masks properly. Wearing a mask below the nose completely voids the already marginal effectiveness of this type of mask.

Journal of Infection Control, concluded that N-95 respirators don’t provide complete protection against small virions. Even with a perfect fit — but with less than 100-percent efficiency and particle size-capture constraints — an N-95 respirator is not fully protective. Yet the N-95 provides better protection than a surgical or cloth mask. The N-95 respirator (without an exhalation valve) performs well for Source Control, although one study published in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene* indicated that Source Control efficacy could be improved by sealing the mask further.

Face Mask Problems and Hazards

Personal Protective Equipment, such as a face mask, is the last choice for hazard mitigation, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health’s

Hierarchy of Controls. One reason for this is PPE ineffectiveness! Factors such as non-compliance, lack of training, and design limitations all contribute to face mask ineffectiveness.

One of the reasons that PPE is the lowest control strategy for hazard mitigation is because people are human: We make mistakes. We not only forget to wear them, we might take the mask off at lunch, but then do not put it back on when we re-enter the hazardous situation. And face masks can be hot and sweaty, and fog up eyeglasses, causing us to lower them on the face to get relief. They’re also lowered because they make verbal communication and breathing a bit harder. As soon as one does this, the mask is not working to protect you or those around you.

Even observational studies of health-care professionals have shown that they

often incorrectly put on and take off their respirators. Compliance is even more difficult for the untrained public. Training is required for effective PPE use. Face masks become ineffective when a wearer does not know how to examine a mask for flaws or damage prior to use; how to properly clean and store it; when to replace a mask; and how to properly position it on the face. An ill-fitting or damaged mask does little good.

As well, wearing a mask has the potential to create new hazards and even illness.

It has been shown that viruses can collect and hang out on the outside of a mask. This is a source of self-contamination or surface contamination, and leads to spreading the virus if you are not careful handling, removing, and disposing of the mask. Moreover, frequently touching your face to adjust an ill-fitting or uncomfortable mask increases the risk of viral exposure by transferring the virus from mask to fingers to common surfaces — or your face.

Others can then pick up the virus from the contaminated surface and, in a moment of poor hygiene, infect the mucous membranes of the nose, mouth, or eyes. This happened to a woman from Charlotte, North Carolina, even though she claimed to follow quarantining perfectly and wore a mask and gloves regularly. One trip to the pharmacy (gloved and masked) and contact with a virus-contaminated credit card reader was all it took (according to contact tracers), and she became sick with the coronavirus.

Studies point to other detrimental health effects of wearing a face mask, especially the tighter-fitting N-95 respirator, if worn for extended periods of time:

- Headaches are a frequent complaint with N-95 use and attributed to impaired breathing.

- One study showed that mask users had a blood oxygen level reduction of 20 percent. Low oxygen levels can cause impaired immunity. According to Dr. Dipankar Saha, scientist and director at the Central Pollution Control Board, this can lead to “oxygen shortage, suffocation, respiratory trouble and heart attacks.”

- In addition, a tight-fitting N-95 can increase viral load. If you are infected, you will constantly be rebreathing the virus and effectively increasing its concentra-

AP Images

tion in the lungs and nasal passages. High viral load early on is associated with worse outcomes for the sick.

• Masks are a potential source of bacteria and viruses. “The moisture from exhalation inside the mask, when in constant contact with the 37 degrees Celsius warm human body, becomes [an] ideal place for virus and bacteria to thrive,” said Dr. Saha.

And simply covering one’s nose and mouth doesn’t stop pathogens from entering your body. According to the American Optometric Association, it is possible that the coronavirus can enter through the conjunctiva of the eye and spread through the body via blood vessels.

Dr. Joseph Fair, a prominent virologist, contracted COVID even though he stated he was using “max precautions,” indicating he was wearing a face mask and gloves while in public. He suggests the possibility that he became infected through eye contact. He states, “Even people like me that do this for a living” can make mistakes (although he does not recall making one).

So in answer to the question, “Should I wear face mask?” the answer is gener-

ally “No.” Even WHO, which has taken an alarmist position regarding COVID-19, said on April 6, 2020, “The wide use of masks by healthy people in the community setting is not supported by current evidence and carries uncertainties and critical risk.” This thinking is supported in a commentary by Dr. Russell Blaylock, a nationally recognized, board-certified neurosurgeon, health practitioner, author, and lecturer, who stated in a recent article for the online site Technocracy News & Trends, “It is evident from this review that there is insufficient evidence that wearing a mask of any kind can have a significant impact in preventing the spread of this virus.” He very strongly warns that the healthy should not wear face masks.

For the general population, wearing a face mask is a distractor, taking focus away from the more effective mitigation strategies an individual should take. Yes, an N-95 respiratory and surgical mask might have some utility, but due to the problems and risks of their use by the untrained and unsupervised, these should be reserved for work settings where there

is oversight. In the case of a cloth mask or covering, the data do not support their use. Add the issues of wearing one (difficulty breathing, discomfort, communication hurdles, the potential to cross contaminate, and the increased risk of infection), and the answer becomes clear, as said Dr. Anthony Fauci, who has been elevated by the mainstream media to near god-like status for his views on the pandemic, on a *60 Minutes Overtime* interview: “In America, people should not be walking around with a mask!” (March 8, 2020).

Instead of reliance on a face mask for protection, impeccable personal hygiene, isolation of the sick and high risk, social distancing, and decontamination of common surfaces should be emphasized.

Immaculate personal hygiene includes often and carefully washing your hands, using hand sanitizer when hand washing is not possible, and keeping your hands away your face. These sound like a “duh” to most people, but they are critical to disease-transmission prevention.

Stay healthy. ■

ULINE

OVER 2,200 LABEL PRODUCTS IN STOCK

ORDER BY 6 PM FOR SAME DAY SHIPPING

COMPLETE CATALOG 1-800-295-5510 uline.com

The advertisement features a collage of shipping and labeling products. On the left, a brown cardboard box is shown with a white label that reads "PACKING LIST ENCLOSED" and "ULINE". Below the box are several rolls of labels: a red "FRAGILE" label with "HANDLE WITH CARE" and "THANK YOU" text, and a green "QC APPROVAL" label. In the center, a stack of colorful labels is visible. On the right, a white and black label printer is shown with a roll of white labels. Below the printer is a roll of blue labels. At the bottom right, a brown cardboard box is shown with a white label that reads "LOCATION 508B".



AP Images

All-knowing government? The *Washington Post* has reported that Dr. Deborah Birx (right) has been “frustrated with the CDC’s antiquated system for tracking virus data, which they worried was inflating some statistics.”

Said Birx during the argument, according to the *Post*’s sources: “There is nothing from the CDC that I can trust.”

That’s a sentiment, when it comes to the risk posed by the coronavirus, that many American citizens must feel. For weeks now the mainstream media have produced a steady stream of scare stories about the virus. Watching or reading the news in any mainstream source for too long, one begins to forgive frightened Americans who think that they are now living some simulacrum in real life of the popular pandemic zombie drama *The Walking Dead*. Contrary to the mainstream fearmongering, however, statistics for the pandemic’s infection and death rates seem to indicate that the disease is not as apocalyptic as Democrats, other statisticians, and their mainstream media allies have endlessly reported.

Widespread Infection — Low Death Rates

In April, a team of researchers, including Stanford’s John Ioannidis — described by *Wired* magazine as “a fixture in medical-school curricula for years, achieving something akin to hero status” — released results of a study of COVID-19 infections in Santa Clara County, California. Based on testing for antibodies to the virus, they found that the disease was more widespread than previously believed.

“The most important implication of these findings is that the number of infections is much greater than the reported number of cases,” Ioannidis and his collaborators concluded. They continue, noting that “the extent of infection underascertainment is a central input for estimation of infection fatality rates from COVID-19.”

Based on their findings, the researchers concluded that by April 1 as many as 54,000 people had been infected in Santa Clara County. Comparing this finding with the number of deaths in the county from COVID-19 would allow for an estimation of the actual infection fatality rate from the disease.

Is the COVID-19 Death Toll BEING PADDED?

Data about the prevalence and severity of COVID-19 are revealing a disease that, while serious, is not as deadly as public-health agencies and the mainstream media have reported.

by Dennis Behreandt

It is not difficult to imagine the scene inside the conference rooms hosting the internal discussions of the White House coronavirus task force. Within those walls the highest stakes are in play as the nation’s public-health authorities, top administration bureaucrats, and politicians — including the president and vice president — debate the issues and policies that are having a direct and dire impact on the lives, fortunes, and freedoms of the American people. There is likely to be dismay and distress. It seems unavoidable that there would be heated arguments.

The vapors of one of those arguments seem to have slipped past the mask of unity worn by the members of the task force since the onset of pandemic in the United

States. During one such meeting on May 6, according to the *Washington Post*, Dr. Deborah Birx — one of the two high-profile leaders of the administration’s response to the virus, along with Dr. Anthony Fauci — got into an argument with Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“During a task force meeting ... a heated discussion broke out between Deborah Birx, the physician who oversees the administration’s coronavirus response, and Robert Redfield,” the *Post* reported. “Birx and others were frustrated with the CDC’s antiquated system for tracking virus data, which they worried was inflating some statistics — such as mortality rate and case count — by as much as 25 percent, according to four people present for the discussion or later briefed on it.”

“Through April 22, 2020, 94 people died from COVID-19 in the County,” the researchers wrote. If our estimates of 54,000 infections represent the cumulative total on April 1, and we assume a 3 week lag from time of infection to death, up to April 22, then 94 deaths out of 54,000 infections correspond to an infection fatality rate of 0.17% in Santa Clara County.”

This death rate is considerably lower than the eye-wateringly high numbers bandied about in the early days of the pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). In remarks delivered on March 3, WHO Director-General Tedros Ghebreyesus said, “Globally, about 3.4% of reported COVID-19 cases have died. By comparison, seasonal flu generally kills far fewer than 1% of those infected.”

Padding the Numbers?

In April the Centers for Disease Control issued guidance to healthcare workers when deciding cause of death in COVID-19 patients. The document, which was revealed in short order by concerned doctors, gained notoriety for suggesting that even when “a definite diagnosis of COVID-19 cannot be made,” it could still be listed as the cause of death if it were suspected or likely, noting that “it is acceptable to report COVID-19 on a death certificate as ‘probable’ or ‘presumed’” in such cases.

Minnesota State Senator Scott Jensen,

a family doctor and a clinical associate professor at the University of Minnesota Medical School, was quick to criticize the CDC COVID-19 cause-of-death guidance.

“The idea that we are going to allow people to massage and sort of game the numbers is a real issue because we are going to undermine the [public] trust,” he told Fox News’ Laura Ingraham. “And right now as we see politicians doing things that aren’t necessarily motivated on fact and science, their trust in politicians is already wearing thin.”

He also pointed out the way government funding might be contributing to distortions in how hospitals provide care. “Right now Medicare has determined that if you have a COVID-19 admission to the hospital, you’ll get paid \$13,000. If that COVID-19 patient goes on a ventilator, you get \$39,000, three times as much. Nobody can tell me after 35 years in the world of medicine that sometimes those kinds of things impact on what we do.” So hospitals get more money to put COVID patients on ventilators than if they do not put them on ventilators, suggesting that prospect of monetary gain is driving patient care, rather than patient need and doctor evaluation.

As for coding deaths for COVID-19, Dr. Jensen pointed to an extreme example of how the statistics might be manipulated under current CDC guidance.

“Let’s just take someone getting hit by a bus and they collapse a lung and they go into the emergency room and they are there for 18-20 minutes. Blood work comes back. COVID test comes back positive and they die 20 minutes later because of their collapsed lung. We’re going to put that down as COVID-19? That doesn’t make any sense.”

Underscoring this point, Fox News’ Laura Ingraham reported that the health director for the state of Illinois, Dr. Ngozi Ezike, admitted, while governor J.B. Pritzker looked on, that “If you were in hospice and had already been given, you know, a few weeks to live and then you also were found to have COVID that would be counted as a COVID death.... Even if you died of a clear alternate cause but you had COVID at the same time it’s still listed as a COVID death.”

Dr. Ezike has since tried to walk this back. “We are reporting those deaths that have laboratory confirmation, meaning that they have been tested and a laboratory test indicates that they were COVID positive,” she said on May 12, according to Chicago NBC television affiliate WMAQ.

Mainstream media critics contend that concern over the CDC guidance causing an overestimation of deaths from COVID-19 is a “conspiracy theory.” But the practice was admitted by Dr. Birx in early April. “The intent is ... if someone dies



Ventilators: Critics, including family doctor and Minnesota State Senator Scott Jensen, have pointed out that Medicare offers considerably higher payments for hospitals treating COVID-19 patients with ventilators. And though the ventilators have harmed patients, many patients were put on them.

AP Images



AP Images

Perspective: COVID-19 sickens many, but most recover. Still, extreme lockdowns were put in place based on the disease. Worse diseases, which have sickened or killed far more people, have not led to such overreactions.

with COVID-19 we are counting that,” she said, according to Fox News.

Perspective

Understanding is always dependent upon context and perspective. Segmented from its context and environment, a fact may appear striking, frightening, or impressive, and its measure is dependent upon only the bias of the observer. Put that item back into proper context, back into its environment, and a better understanding becomes possible. A wide-angle photo of a single redwood tree, standing on a rock, surrounded by ocean may appear to be simply a tree, unremarkable and indistinguishable from other trees. Put a person next to that same tree in the photo, and the true scale of the majestic redwood becomes immediately obvious. The tree and the person are not the same species, but the comparison of one to the other provides immediate clarification of scale.

The same is true of the current pandemic. Viewed alone, it seems a horror, justifying nearly every tyranny to stop it. But in the context of other risks, COVID-19, though terrible, becomes no more terrible than the many other risks humans face as a consequence of being alive.

It’s not fashionable to compare COVID-19 to the flu, but Lisa Lockerd Maragakis, M.D., of Johns Hopkins Medicine, has done it, so it is worth considering her numbers. For COVID-19, she reports: “Approximately 4,194,326 cases have been confirmed worldwide. There have been 1,347,936 cases in the U.S. as of May 12, 2020.”

For the flu she writes: “The World Health Organization estimates that 1 billion people worldwide get the flu every year.”

As for deaths, Dr. Lockerd Maragakis says of COVID-19: “There have been approximately 286,669 deaths reported worldwide. In the U.S., 80,684 people have died of COVID-19, as of May 12, 2020.”

For the flu, she reports: “The World Health Organization estimates that 290,000 to 650,000 people die of flu-related causes every year worldwide.”

If we take these numbers even at face value, we see in COVID-19 a disease that may be somewhat deadlier than the flu but sickens far fewer people. Consider also that the number of flu infections may be overstated based on how flu is traced and that COVID-19 prevalence is likely understated with the number of infections

detected likely to rise considerably as testing increases, suggesting many cases in the first months of the pandemic have gone unnoticed. In such a case, we are left seemingly to agree with Dr. Anthony Fauci, who in a February 28 online article for the *New England Journal of Medicine* said of COVID-19 that “the case fatality rate may be considerably less than 1%.” This suggests that the overall clinical consequences of Covid-19 may ultimately be more akin to those of a severe seasonal influenza.”

For additional perspective we should also keep in mind other causes of mortality. According to the CDC, for example, “In 2016, the latest year for which incidence data are available, 1,658,716 new cases of cancer were reported, and 598,031 people died of cancer in the United States.” For heart disease, another leading killer, the CDC reports that “One person dies every 37 seconds in the United States from cardiovascular disease.” In total, the CDC reports that 647,000 Americans die from the disease every year. Other leading causes of death are chronic lower respiratory diseases (160,201 deaths), stroke (146,383 deaths), Alzheimer’s disease (121,404 deaths) and diabetes (83,564 deaths), according to the CDC.

COVID-19 is indeed a dangerous disease. The virus that causes it is quite infectious, and is potentially deadly, especially for those with underlying health problems or who are more advanced in age. The harm it causes, and the danger it represents, should not be minimized.

But neither should the similar harms and dangers represented by the flu and other diseases be minimized. Yet, for one disease we have seen the end of freedom, the invigoration of the tyrannical surveillance state, the acceptance of rule by decree, the impoverishment of many millions of people, and the wholesale firebombing of the Main Street economy. This wanton destruction is not merely economic, but is having real and damaging effects on people’s health by driving high levels of stress and despair, and reducing the availability of other badly needed healthcare services. Causes of death other than COVID-19 are almost certain to spike as a result.

It is high time to end this manufactured catastrophe and restore freedom to the Republic and its people. ■

Patronizing Politicos

Even as they warn, badger, or call for arrests of those not abiding by coronavirus lockdowns, those who want lockdowns because they “care” ignore the quarantines themselves.



AP Images

Executive privilege: Just one day after his wife released ads urging African-Americans to stay home to stop the spread of COVID-19, former President Barack Obama hit the links.

by *Michael Tennant*

On April 24, former First Lady Michelle Obama released two public-service announcements (PSAs) urging African-Americans to stay home in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Michael Tennant is a freelance writer and regular contributor to THE NEW AMERICAN.

“Our communities are among the hardest-hit by the coronavirus, and we’ve got to do everything we can to keep each other safe,” she said in one PSA. “And that means staying home because even if we are not showing any symptoms, we can still spread the virus to others. Let’s keep each other safe by just staying home.”

The very next day, her husband, former President Barack Obama, was spotted

golfing at an exclusive club in Virginia that is at least a 45-minute drive from the Obamas’ Washington, D.C., home. “Apparently,” quipped PJ Media’s Matt Margolis, Mr. Obama “didn’t get the memo.”

In reality, the Obamas, like so many other movers and shakers, simply don’t feel the need to abide by the same rules they expect the rest of us to obey unquestioningly. This is not uncommon among statisticians, particularly those of the “progressive” persuasion, who lecture the rest of us on the need to help the poor while they donate next to nothing to charity, or claim everyone else must revert to hunter-gatherer status to save the planet while they fly all over the world in carbon-spewing private jets.

Such hypocrisy may, however, have reached new heights under the draconian coronavirus lockdowns. Those ordering people to stay home and “nonessential” businesses to close, and those who most vocally advocate for obedience to these policies, seem to feel quite unencumbered by them.

Start Spreadin’ the Germs

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, for instance, is a proud proponent of his state’s coronavirus orders. He has pleaded with Gothamites to rat out individuals and institutions they believe are violating the orders, and he personally oversaw the police dispersal of an Orthodox Jewish funeral within the city limits, later threatening “the Jewish community” with “arrest” for further violations.

But when it comes to obeying those

same orders, the mayor's name should perhaps be changed to de *Blasé*. Just hours before New York's governor ordered the closure of "nonessential" businesses, including gyms — because the federal government was cautioning against large gatherings — de Blasio made his daily appearance at a city YMCA, a move that two of his former advisors denounced on Twitter. Since then, de Blasio and his wife, along with a full security detail, have continued to take daily walks in Brooklyn's Prospect Park. The park is 12 miles from Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence, which includes 11 acres of land and is situated within yet another city park. The pair were even seen strolling in the park without face masks a mere two days after de Blasio told New Yorkers to "wear a face covering when you go outside."

Challenged on a television program about the contradiction between his

words and his deeds, de Blasio said, "I go get my exercise like everyone else." The walks, he added, "help me to continue working nonstop," which might be the best reason to put an end to them.

"This is something we just shouldn't focus on," he said. "There's much better things to talk about." Besides, he rationalized, "My situation is particular."

In layman's terms: "I'm special and shouldn't be held to the same standards as the rest of you proles. Now lay off!"

Elsewhere in the Empire State, CNN anchor Chris Cuomo, who had been broadcasting from his basement since he was diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 31, decided to take a mask- and glove-free Easter Sunday jaunt to some undeveloped property he owns in East Hampton, a 30-minute drive from his home in Southampton.

"When you watch television, you imagine Chris Cuomo is a responsible

journalist," Fox News Channel's Tucker Carlson remarked. "In fact, he's Typhoid Mary."

Confronted by a bicyclist in East Hampton, Cuomo allegedly shot back, "Who the hell are you? I can do what I want!" The cyclist told the *New York Post* Cuomo "just ranted, screaming, 'I'll find out who you are!'" and threatened him with retaliation.

Responding to the accusations on his SiriusXM radio show, an unchastened Cuomo lamented that, in his version of events, his position in the media prevented him from telling the cyclist off.

Three weeks later, on CNN, Cuomo showed video of Americans enjoying a sunny day outside without masks and social distancing. "Fools!" he exclaimed. "It's not about you. What about the other people?" That thought apparently never crossed his mind when he chose to visit his vacant lot while knowing that he was infected with COVID-19.

Cuomo's brother, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo — who admitted on March 26 that ordering New Yorkers to shelter in place "was probably not the best public health strategy" but kept the order in place nonetheless — said at a May 4 press conference, "You could literally kill someone because you didn't want to wear a mask." The governor, however, was not wearing a mask at the time, and neither were the two people seated beside him; all three, therefore, were potential murderers in his book.

Do What I Say, Not What I Do

Illinois, which has been under lockdown orders since March 21, also has its share of patronizing personages.

After Governor J. B. Pritzker issued his first order, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot recorded several PSAs encouraging Chicagoans to heed it, including one in which she told someone on the telephone, "Getting your roots done is not essential!" Within a week of the ads' release, Lightfoot got caught having her hair professionally cut when her stylist posted on Facebook a picture of herself standing right next to Lightfoot; neither was wearing a mask or gloves. (CBS2 Chicago said it had received complaints "that the mayor is not always social distancing at other public events.")



Walk of shame: Even as he cracks down on stay-at-home violators, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio continues to take daily strolls in a park miles from his home.

AP Images



Vanity unfair: After telling Chicagoans that getting their hair done is “not essential” — beauty salons are closed under Illinois’ coronavirus orders — Mayor Lori Lightfoot got a haircut, claiming it was necessary because she’s “on national media.”

AP Images

Questioned by reporters about the apparent contradiction between her exhortations and her actions, “Lightfoot acknowledged getting a haircut, then said the public cares more about other issues,” wrote the *Chicago Tribune*.

A follow-up question caused Lightfoot to become “visibly annoyed,” the paper noted. “I’m the public face of this city. I’m on national media and I’m out in the public eye,” she said. “I felt like I needed to have a haircut ... so I got a haircut,” she added. As for the “little people” who need but can’t get haircuts because of Pritzker’s orders, Lightfoot’s opinion seems to be “Let them eat Brylcreem.”

Pritzker, for his part, claimed at the time that he was starting to “turn into a hippie” because he couldn’t get a haircut. His wife, on the other hand, seems to have felt free to travel to the couple’s “\$12-million equestrian estate” in Florida despite her hubby’s orders, according to Patch.com.

When a reporter asked Pritzker about the matter, the governor self-righteously dodged the question. “The first thing I’d

like to say is that in politics it used to be that we kept our families out of it,” he said. “My official duties have nothing to do with my family. So I’m not going to answer that question. It’s inappropriate and I find it reprehensible, honestly, that a reporter wrote a story about it.”

In other words, “Everyone else in this state had better do as I say, but my family can do whatever they please.”

Hypocrisy Goes Viral

American elites haven’t cornered the market on this kind of hypocrisy. Public figures in other countries have likewise been found unfaithful to the rules they impose on the rest of their citizens.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who has locked down the Great White North, posted a video on Easter Sunday reminding Canadians that they weren’t allowed to spend the holiday with their families.

“I know that for many Canadians, it won’t be easy to celebrate Easter without being surrounded by our extended family or a larger group of loved ones,” he said.

“But we have to do it for the safety of all Canadians.” He even suggested that it was what Jesus would want people to do.

As for Trudeau, he took a 30-minute drive from Ottawa to his official country residence in Quebec so he could spend Easter with his wife and children, who were staying there. When reporters asked him why he was allowed to visit his family after forbidding everyone else to do so, Trudeau essentially said, “Because I can,” offering no justification for it other than wanting to see his wife and kids.

Across the pond, Scotland’s chief medical officer, Dr. Catherine Calderwood, resigned from her post on April 5 after it was found that she had twice traveled to her second home while the country was under lockdown — a policy she had publicly supported in PSAs and daily press briefings. Calderwood at least showed some remorse for what she had done, not just the fact that she’d gotten caught, saying that she was “deeply sorry for my actions and the mistakes I have made” and that the attention they had received was “justifiable.”

The biggest coronavirus hypocrite of all has to be the United Kingdom’s Dr. Neil Ferguson. The epidemiologist’s computer models, which forecast 250,000 COVID-19 deaths in the U.K. and 2.2 million in the United States (he later revised those numbers down significantly), led directly to Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s imposition of lockdown policies and indirectly to many of the lockdowns imposed in the United States. Ferguson even promoted Communist China’s extreme quarantine policies, which *The Guardian* called “brutal but effective.” (Far too many of these policies, such as closing businesses, banning travel, and requiring people to wear masks in public, have been implemented in supposedly free countries.)

“Under [Johnson’s] measures people were told to go out as little as possible, with partners who live separately later being told they should ‘ideally’ stay in their own homes,” reported the BBC.

However, according to the *Telegraph*, after testing positive for COVID-19, Ferguson nevertheless enjoyed at least two subsequent visits from his married mistress, who not only could have contracted the disease herself but also could have

passed it on to her husband and children when she returned home.

“Ferguson was happy to help shut down the entire United Kingdom,” observed Fox’s Carlson, “but it turns out he wasn’t that interested at all in participating in it personally.”

Ferguson was forced to resign from his government advisory position, saying he had “made an error of judgment.” However, he defended his actions (having company, though not necessarily sleeping with someone else’s wife) by explaining, “I had acted in the belief that I was immune, having tested positive for coronavirus and completely isolated myself for almost two weeks after developing symptoms.”

Of course, no one yet knows for sure whether two weeks is enough time to become noncontagious, or if one can even contract the disease more than once. “For a famous scientist, Neil Ferguson is curiously ignorant of science,” said Carlson. “He’s also, obviously, an appalling hypocrite.”

Indeed, despite having been caught

disregarding policies he had helped bring about and revealing his lack of scientific understanding, Ferguson still says the government’s social-distancing recommendations are “unequivocal” and exist “to protect all of us.”

Fortunately for Ferguson, he’s a high-placed scientist with influential friends, so he doesn’t have to worry about being fined or arrested for his violations. Scotland Yard told the BBC that while Ferguson’s behavior was “plainly disappointing,” officers “do not intend to take any further action.”

Wherefore Art Thou Hypocrites?

The hypocrisy of the lockdown lovers raises further questions.

First, are these people saying one thing but doing another because they consider themselves superior to the rest of humanity? Certainly the responses of some, such as Lightfoot and Trudeau, suggest that is the case.

Second, is it possible that they are, after all, human and thus incapable of abiding by such inhumane, destructive

policies? Most people have certainly found this to be the case: An analysis of cellphone location data by the firm Unacast revealed that Americans under supposed lockdowns have curtailed their travel by as little as 25 percent and their “nonessential” visits by less than 55 percent. Still, those Americans who have been caught by cops or snitched on by neighbors have been subject to fines, jail time, and even physical abuse, while these muckety-mucks suffer comparatively little.

Third, are they disobeying orders because they know staying home and social distancing are pointless endeavors, either because the whole coronavirus panic is overblown or because, even if it is a genuine cause for concern, there seems to be little correspondence between lockdowns and COVID-19 deaths?

Whatever the case, the elites’ flouting of the orders they demand everyone else obey “would be infuriating if these people didn’t run the world,” declared Carlson. “But it’s worse than that, because they do.” ■

*Containerized Storage From
The People Who Invented The Concept*

MARTIN

CONTAINER, INC.

Serving You Since 1976

***Straight From the Harbor to Your Site
Refrigerated Units Always Available***

**LENGTHS UP TO 45'
24-HOUR DELIVERY
BUY OR RENT**



**REFRIGERATOR/FREEZERS
ALSO AVAILABLE**

www.container.com

1-800-221-3727

QUESTIONING QAnon

“Q Anonymous,” better known as QAnon, is one or more bloggers who claim to have secret info from inside the Trump White House. The inside insights regularly fail to pan out, yet “Q” is still popular.

by C. Mitchell Shaw

One or more web pundits called “Q” have claimed to have inside knowledge about the Trump administration and those working against it. But Q’s insights aren’t astute.

On Sunday, October 30, 1938, CBS Radio broadcast an Orson Welles dramatization of H.G. Wells’ novel *War of the Worlds*. The broadcast — framed as a series of news broadcasts — included a disclaimer at the beginning stating that it was fictional. Unfortunately, many people across the country tuned in late and missed that disclaimer. Some listeners thought what they were hearing were actual news reports interrupting an evening of musical programming. The fictional news reports were of a series of attacks by Martians. Those who were fooled by the production panicked as a result. Some reports indicate the panic was widespread; others indicate that it was rare. At any rate, those who panicked did so because they fully believed that Earth was being attacked by an advanced alien race.

It is an easy thing for those of us living in 2020 to view — with some amusement — those 1938 listeners as simpletons. After all, they actually thought Earth was under inter-planetary attack. How simple-minded can you get? But it is important to take into account the concept of confirmation bias.

C. Mitchell Shaw, a freelance writer, is a strong advocate of both the free market and privacy. He addresses a wide range of issues related to the U.S. Constitution and liberty.



No Questions asked: Q attracts people from a wide range of age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. What most of them have in common is the prolific way they share Q posts on social media. But, are those posts founded in fact or fantasy?

People had been writing about and discussing the possibility of advanced alien life-forms since at least the 1500s, and the term “flying saucer” dates to a January 25, 1878 newspaper article detailing the account of a farmer claiming he had seen one. With additional claims of sightings and news reports of “flying saucers” from the early 1900s to the late 1920s, the idea was well inculcated in the public mind. It is no surprise then that those who were predisposed to entertain (if not outright *believe*) such accounts would panic upon hearing what they believed were news reports of a Martian military invasion. It confirmed their bias. On October 28, 2017 — almost 79 years

after *War of the Worlds* — an anonymous 4chan user employing the moniker “Q” claimed to have access to classified information involving the battle between the Trump administration and its opponents in the Deep State.

Again, the power of confirmation bias showed itself. Since it was obvious to any honest observer that President Trump was the victim of a tar-and-feather campaign, as well as a well-orchestrated witch hunt, Q seemed to “fill in the blanks” and explain what was really going on “behind the scenes.” As a result, many suspended critical thinking and took — as unquestionable truth — whatever Q proposed, including Q’s predictions of what would

happen. This, even though no one knew who he (or much more likely *they*) was, and even when the conspiracy theories got wilder and wilder. That suspension of critical thinking — fueled at least in part by confirmation bias — continued even as prediction after prediction has failed to come to pass, and some theories even directly contradicted previous theories. There is a story (likely apocryphal) about Winston Churchill that illustrates this particular Q dynamic. It is said that Churchill attended a dinner party and was standing at the bottom of a staircase with his host. As two women began to descend, Churchill motioned to the women and remarked to his host, “There is the most unhand-some woman I have ever seen.” The host, shocked, replied, “That, sir, is my *wife*.” Without missing a beat, Churchill said, “I was referring to the other.” When the man informed him that the other was his daughter, Churchill downed the remainder of his drink, looked the man in the eye, and said, “Sir, I never said it.”

That story — though not likely to be true — is funny. What Q does is not. Another difference is that the mythical host did not likely believe that Churchill never said it, while Q followers are so bombarded with one fanciful theory after another that they likely can’t keep up with

what was said and see where one claim contradicts something else that was said. However, it is not merely the contradictions that should give one pause where Q is concerned. Those contradictions are part of a larger picture of failed predictions — referred to as *prophecies* by some followers. Many of the failed “prophecies” also fit neatly into the category of contradictions, since they are merely the resetting of dates after the promised dates came and went without the “prophecies” being fulfilled.

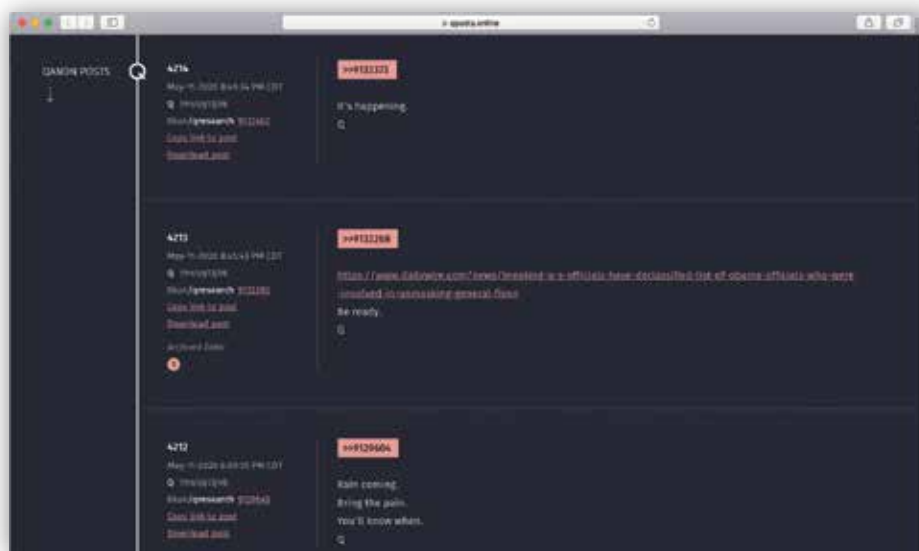
And it’s not as though Q began with fulfilled predictions before stepping up to the plate, swinging for the fence, and hitting nothing but air. Q’s failures started with the first prediction, known as Drop #1 (Q posts are called “drops” and are numbered and dated).

Drop #1 — dated October 28, 2017 at 4:44 p.m. — was not entirely a prediction of the future. It also contained elements that it claimed were present and past. That drop read, “HRC [Hillary Rodham Clinton] extradition already in motion and effective yesterday with several countries in case of cross border run.” This, of course, assumed that Hillary Clinton was soon to be arrested. The drop continued, claiming that Clinton’s passport was “approved to be flagged effective 10/30 @12:01am.”

The drop then stated, “Expect massive riots organized in defiance and others fleeing the US to occur. US M’s [military] will conduct the operation while NG [National Guard] activated.”

For those who doubted the veracity of the claims of Drop #1, Q offered this at the conclusion of the post: “Proof check: Locate a NG [National Guard] member and ask if activated for duty 10/30 across most major cities.” If those who read that drop at the time had taken that challenge, Q would likely have fizzled out, and there would not have been subsequent failed predictions — because there was no military operation, no activation of the National Guard, no mass riots, no Clinton accomplices fleeing the country. In fact, nothing predicted or claimed in the drop turned out to be true. Most notably, instead of Hillary Clinton being arrested on October 28, 2017 — beginning the end of the Deep State/DNC conspiracy — it turned out that two of President Trump’s former aides, Paul Manafort and Rick Gates, were charged on that date and turned themselves in. A third former Trump aide (George Papadopoulos) was reported that day to have already pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI. Now, while the Deep State conspiracy is a reality, and there is certainly a battle taking place for the survival of America, one danger in the Q approach is that patriots who follow and cite Q in their discourse with others lose credibility with each failed prediction. For instance, if someone who follows and cites Q on issues related to the Deep State conspiracy attempts to share information about an issue that is well documented — such as the evidence of actual collusion between Clinton and Russia — people have already ceased listening because the credibility of the person presenting the information has been sacrificed by repeating Q’s myriad cries of “wolf!”

Perhaps it would ameliorate things to at least a small degree if Q had followed Drop #1 with something that had a shred of credibility, but instead, Drop #2 followed an hour and a half later with claims that “HRC” had been “detained,” but “not arrested (yet)” and enigmatic questions with no foundation in truth, such as, “Why did Soros donate all his money recently?” It is obvious two and a half years later that Hillary Clinton has not been detained or



Quarrel-worthy: Q posts tend to be enigmatic. Like the writings of Nostradamus, they are wide open to wild interpretation. The relatively few Q predictions that are clear and direct have failed to come to pass.



AP Images

Quack claims: Though Q predicted the arrest of Hillary Clinton — claiming inside information that it would take place and that many of her accomplices would flee the country — it has still not happened more than two and half years after the predicted date.

arrested. And — given his continued penchant for funding Marxist, anti-American programs and causes — George Soros had not donated all of his money by October 30, 2017.

Before moving forward with a more complete list of Q’s falsehoods, let’s spend a little ink and paper addressing the deliberately enigmatic nature of many Q drops going back to the very beginning. In what appears to a vain attempt at just enough mystery to keep from being called out as a fraud, Q often reads like Nostradamus. For example, Drop #4, dated October 29 at 12:11 p.m. reads:

Some of us come here to drop crumbs, just crumbs.

POTUS [the president of the United States] is 100% insulated — any discussion suggesting he’s even a target is false.

POTUS will not be addressing nation on any of these issues as people begin to be indicted and must remain neutral for pure optical reasons. To suggest this is the plan is false and should be common sense.

Focus on Military Intelligence/ State Secrets and why might that be used vs any three letter agency

What SC [presumably “Supreme Court”] decision opened the door for a sitting President to activate — what

must be showed?

Why is POTUS surrounded by generals ^^

Again, there are a lot more good people than bad so have faith. This was a hostile takeover from an evil corrupt network of players (not just Democrats).

Don’t fool yourself into thinking Obama, Soros, Roth’s, Clinton’s etc have more power present day than POTUS.

Operation Mockingbird

Patriots are in control. Sit back and enjoy the show.

There is more to unpack in that drop than the space of this article allows, so this writer will take what he sees as the three most obvious and important. First, the idea of “drop[ing] crumbs, just crumbs” sets a theme for the next 4,147 drops, as of this writing. Much of what Q posts is left up to the reader to divine and interpret, leaving Q free of any blame for any misinterpretation. If Q truly wants to expose something and help patriots along the path to enlightenment, wouldn’t it be better to be clear instead of deliberately vague? Second, the claim that “POTUS will not be addressing nation on any of these issues as people begin to be indicted and must remain neutral for pure optical reasons” and that to “suggest this is the plan is false and

should be common sense” is a plain cop out. Since no one Q has claimed would be indicted has actually been indicted, doesn’t it make more sense that President Trump has not addressed the nation on any of this because there is nothing to Q’s claims?

And third, the admonition that since “patriots are in control” we should all just “sit back and enjoy the show” creates a dangerous apathy. Someone who follows Q only has two responsibilities: Repost without verifying the veracity or credibility of any given claim, and stay out of the way. In other words, do nothing.

As an example of the Nostradamus-like nature of posts that leave followers scarping the Internet for clues to any meaning, consider Drop #672:

Find the roll.

1 of 4.

Find the 4th.

Find the film.

Not the capture.

Enhance.

Spread.

Will go viral.

Source _ archive offline.

Raw only.

More importantly, drop after drop is an exercise in data overload, with more contradictions and false claims than can be counted. For example, Drop #15, dated October 31, 2017 at 11:00 p.m., claims that Clinton accomplice John Podesta will be indicted on November 3, followed by Clinton protégé Huma Abedin on November 6. Furthermore, the post ends with the statement that “Soros is targeted.” But that was two and half years ago and it never materialized.

Thirty one minutes later, Drop #16 said:

Get the popcorn, Friday & Saturday will deliver on the MAGA promise. POTUS knows he must clean house (gov’t) in order to ‘free up’ and demonstrate who has authority in order to pass important legislation. This was always the priority. Remember, AG Sessions cannot look like an impartial player that is out to get all former Obama team members as we need him for other important work. All will come into focus and for anyone

That drop read, “HRC [Hillary Rodham Clinton] extradition already in motion and effective yesterday with several countries in case of cross border run.” This, of course, assumed that Hillary Clinton was soon to be arrested.



UnQualified claim: On November 31, 2017, Q claimed — as a “fact” — that President Trump was “100% insulated with zero risk of impeachment.” This was proven false by Trump’s subsequent impeachment.

AP Images

There are many, many more such examples, but that should suffice.

Perhaps a comparison between Q and this magazine’s parent company, The John Birch Society, will help illuminate what real patriot leadership looks like. Since its founding in 1958, The John Birch Society has published innumerable books, articles, and other documents to expose the forces bent on global control. In all of the claims made by JBS, four points stand out. First, they are all deliberately clear, never vague and obfuscated to create confusion or misinterpretation. Second, they have all been painstakingly researched and documented, usually including citations to original source material. Third, JBS has never been shown to have gone out on any limbs with unfounded theories. In other words, JBS has never credibly been accused of making false claims or predictions. And fourth, when JBS exposes a problem, it also proposes a solution that members and others can work to employ. In other words, the JBS recognizes that if we are going to save our freedoms, we must work to bring that about through our own hard work (while, of course, also recognizing the need for God’s help); we cannot sit back and watch the show, expecting somebody else to save our freedoms for us. None of this can be said of Q. And above and beyond all of that, JBS publishes a list of its leaders, both at its headquarters in Appleton, Wisconsin, and in the field staff across the country. While Q’s followers have speculated wildly about who Q is, no one knows. But given the facts populating this article, the question should be raised: If the Deep State wanted to discredit and neutralize American patriots, could it have invented anything that would have been better designed for that purpose than Q? Of course, considering the trollish nature of 4chan, it is just as likely that Q is a group of 20-somethings laughing themselves silly for having pulled off a large-scale Internet prank that has taken on a life of its own.

One thing is obvious: Q is not — as claimed — someone with access to classified information involving the battle between the Trump administration and its opponents in the liberal establishment and who is working to save America by sharing the truth. ■

to think POTUS is not in control is kidding themselves. Also, he’s 100% insulated with zero risk of impeachment (fact).

Nothing of any importance to the dismantling of the Deep State or anything else happened the following Friday or Saturday. The only thing of note at all was that the president left for a tour of Asia on Friday, November 3, 2017. No one was fired. No one was indicted. It was a normal day in the business of the federal government. It appears as though that popcorn was wasted. Furthermore, it has since been demonstrated that former Attorney General Jeff Sessions was — at the very least — a weak player for Team Trump. And in a glaring example of a false “prophecy,” President Trump was subsequently impeached.

In drop after drop (#25, #32, #34, #38, #61, #67 #326, #647, and many more), Q

claimed that the National Guard would be called up; key people (here Podesta makes another appearance, as if this prediction had not already been made and failed to come to pass) would be arrested; President Trump would make bombshell tweets; major false-flag operations would be conducted and exposed; and the purge of the Deep State would begin. Despite specific dates and details, none of it ever happened.

Drop #700, though being particularly enigmatic, does contain another clear example of a failed prediction. Following a series of drops about the coming storm that will destroy the Deep State enemies of America, the post read, “[Next week] [Next week] [Next week] Suicide weekend?” Not surprisingly, no suicides came to pass.

In Drop #1014, Q predicted that Mark Zuckerberg would resign from Facebook. That was April 4, 2018, and Zuckerberg is still at the helm of the company he built.



As the Pandemic Continues, So Does the Goodness

As COVID-19 continues to impact the lives of people across the United States, Americans continue to showcase their kindness and extraordinary generosity.

New Friends

College student Lillian Kogan has been using her forced lockdown to make friends with her elderly neighbors.

Stuck in her Manhattan apartment under New York's stay-at-home order, Kogan was lonely and wanted to reach out to her neighbors in the hope of getting a response. Not wanting to violate social-distancing guidelines, Kogan turned to Post-it notes to communicate with her neighbors.

Using a bunch of Post-it notes to spell out the word "Hi!" on her window, Kogan made fast friends with a couple who lives across the street from her. The couple responded to Kogan's note with messages of their own written on construction paper and taped to their windows.

"I was very excited because I had no idea who was responding to me," Kogan told *Inside Edition*.

For several days, Kogan and her neighbors exchanged messages this way, without either knowing what the other looked like, how old they were, etc. It wasn't until Kogan spotted her new "pen pals" sunbathing on their front porch that she noticed the couple was elderly. Immediately, she reached out to ask if they needed anything, to which they politely declined.

But Kogan wanted to do something special for the people who have helped her pass the time. Sporting a face mask and rubber gloves, she baked homemade cookies and sent them to her neighbors with a note that included her name and phone number and instructed them to call her if they needed anything.

The next message to appear on the couple's window was a simple one: "Yum!"

Toni Sonet, 84, later told *Inside Edition* that the cookies Kogan sent them were delicious, and that it was fun to make friends with Kogan in such an unexpected way.

Anonymous Donation

An anonymous donor gifted \$1 million to staffers at a California hospital, with just one caveat: the money be evenly divided among each and every hospital staffer who has worked at the facility for at least one year.

A \$1 million donation arrived at Dignity Health Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz, California, in May with a note that read, "Thank you for standing up (and staying up!) to care for our community. This human kindness is what makes you heroic."

The donor asked that the money be evenly distributed to all staffers, from lab technicians and janitors to mailroom workers and security guards. According to People.com, physicians are not eligible to receive money from the donation, as they are not hospital employees in the state of California.

Nursing Supervisor Amy Loudon applauded the generous donation, noting that hospital staffers are often overlooked at times like this. "There are so many people who keep the hospital running," she told the Associated Press. "Nurses and doctors are getting the praise but we couldn't do it without the staff who clean the floors, deliver supplies, fix machines, everything. It's a team, and I'm glad the whole team is getting a thank you."

Thanks to the anonymous donation, full-time employees will receive an \$800 bonus within the next 30 days, while part-time employees will take home \$600.

Stimulus Check Turned Tip!

A regular customer at the Colonial Steakhouse in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, used his entire \$1,200 stimulus check to leave a tip last month that the restaurant employees won't soon forget.

The Colonial Steakhouse has managed to stay afloat, despite the financial crisis created by the coronavirus shutdowns, by maintaining a team of four employees — down from 12 — to help the restaurant continue to fill curbside orders three days a week.

According to the restaurant's owner, Dana Gately, the tip was enough for every

employee, including those who are not currently working, to receive a \$100 bonus.

Allison Hall, general manager at Colonial Steakhouse, said the generous tip gave her a wonderful opportunity to call her employees with some good news.

"We just started crying and thanking God because it came at a time that most of our staff really needed it," Hall told KARK, an NBC-affiliated TV station. "Things have been barely getting by, but we are making it, though."

Hall added that the restaurant, like other small businesses, has struggled during the shutdown, but is ready to get back up and running as soon as possible. "We've been open for a very long time, nearly 50 years, so we're stubborn and we aren't giving up," Hall said.

Landlord Uses Stimulus Check to Help Tenants

A California landlord, who wishes to remain anonymous, has donated his family's stimulus check to significantly cut the rent for all 13 of his tenants, KNTV reported.

The landlord and his family received a \$3,400 federal stimulus and chose to pay it forward to his "second family" of tenants, whom he believed needed the money more than he did. He then matched the stimulus check to bring the total to \$7,000, and used it to cut \$500 off May's rent for each of his tenants.

The landlord said he was inspired to do something after reading the wonderful stories of businesses and landlords who have gone above and beyond to help their tenants and employees during the COVID-19 crisis.

The tenants were not surprised by their landlord's actions, noting he has been the kindest and most attentive landlord they've ever had.

"It was a great surprise, but I wasn't really that surprised because that's the type of guy he is," tenant Cynthia Whitsitt told KNTV. "He's a great guy."

Whitsitt told KNTV that she was able to use the money she saved from her rent to fix her vehicle. ■

— RAVEN CLABOUGH

EXPLOITING COVID-19 AGAINST FREEDOM

**To Learn More, Check
Out Our Action Page**
<https://www.jbs.org/covid19/>

Hover your phone's camera
over the smart code to see
what you can do!

OUR RESCUING CHILDREN FROM INDOCTRINATION

IT'S HERE, the second, expanded TNA edition about the failure of public schools. It explains that though children are faring worse and worse in public schools, we offer solutions.

**To order, visit ShopJBS.org
or call 1-800-342-6491!**

200608

**“From Trouble Call ...
to Overhaul”**

Gas Compression, Maintenance,
and Machining Services

2689 W. US 290
Giddings, Texas 78942
979-542-9271

www.HR-Machine.com

888-236-8838

**Wisconsin Stamping
& Manufacturing**

Your Idea. Our Ingenuity. A Perfect Match.

TUBULAR
Raschig Rings
Compression Limiters
Spacers

STAMPING
Progressive
Compound
Shallow Draw

**WIRE
FORMING**
2D & 3D Forms
Guards
Thread Rolling

MACHINING
Milling
Swiss CNC Turning
Drill/Tap

FABRICATION
Welding
Laser Cutting
Assembly

CAREERS: HR@WISCONSINSTAMPING.COM

www.wisconsinstamping.com

N110 W13455 North Patton Court • Germantown, WI 53022

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Makes Liberty Sick in the States

As part of the coronavirus pandemic response, governors, mayors, and county officials have been tossing the Constitution and the Bill of Rights into trash bins. Let's not let freedom fail.



AP Images

God alone: Churches have been empty across America, due to government-imposed lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City even threatened to shut down churches and synagogues permanently if they dared to defy him. Other cities, even in the heart of the Bible Belt, also shut down houses of worship, even handing out \$500 fines for attending church services in cars!

by Steve Byas

In New York City, Mayor Bill de Blasio has threatened churches and synagogues with *permanent* closure if they dare to open their buildings of worship to hold services during the coronavirus pandemic. In March, de Blasio said, “A small number of communities, specific churches and synagogues, are unfortunately not paying attention to this guidance [to close during the pandemic] even though it’s so widespread.” One might notice that de

Steve Byas is a university instructor of history and government, and the author of History’s Greatest Libels.

Blasio used the word *guidance* rather than *orders*, but he clearly did not mean that he was just making some wise suggestions.

“I want to say to all of those preparing for the potential of religious services this weekend,” de Blasio said, “if you go to your synagogue, if you go to your church and attempt to hold services after having been told so often not to, our enforcement agents will have no choice but to shut down those services.”

To make sure that neither Christians nor Jews assembled for worship, he added that law enforcement in the city “will take additional action up to the point of fines, and potentially closing the building *permanently*.” (Emphasis added.)

Later, de Blasio singled out members of the Jewish community with threats of arrest after they came together for the funeral service of Rabbi Chaim Mertz. De Blasio was agitated because he found out that not all the mourners practiced what the mayor contended was proper social distancing. “When I heard, I went there myself to ensure the crowd was dispersed,” the mayor tweeted. “And what I saw WILL NOT be tolerated so long as we are fighting the Coronavirus.”

In a follow-up tweet, de Blasio was more specific: “My message to the Jewish community and all communities, is this simple: the time for warnings has passed. I have instructed the NYPD to proceed im-

In Mississippi, undoubtedly part of the “Bible Belt,” church members were fined \$500 in Greenville for violating a curfew order promulgated by Mayor Erick Simmons.



Mr. Bill: Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City has even personally broken up a funeral during the lockdown and threatened anyone who would dare make a public protest against his policies.

mediately to summons or even arrest those who gather in large groups.”

It is certainly difficult to imagine that, in the United States of America, a mayor could actually believe that he has the authority to *permanently* shut down a house of worship. Of course, some might dismiss such warnings as mere hyperbolic bloviating from a mayor of New York City — which is, of course, one of the most left-wing areas of the country.

However, the maxim of 19th-century English political philosopher Lord Acton, “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely,” is not only famous, it’s quite demonstrable in both history and current events.

Evidence that it’s true was produced by recent actions by many state and local officials in their response to the coronavirus pandemic. While some such officials have been mostly restrained in using their powers in an attempt to mitigate the COVID-

19 situation, others have succumbed to the intoxication of power to the point of assaulting the liberties of the people they are supposed to be serving.

And such assertions of power have not been confined to liberal bastions such as New York City.

In Mississippi, undoubtedly part of the “Bible Belt,” church members were fined \$500 in Greenville for violating a curfew order promulgated by Mayor Erick Simmons. During a Thursday night service in April at the King James Bible Baptist Church, attendees were sitting in their vehicles in the church parking lot listening to a message from Charles Hamilton, the pastor, when they were surrounded by Greenville Police.

Jeremy Dys of the First Liberty Institute, who is representing Hamilton, explained what happened. “They [the congregants] park in their parking spaces, they keep their windows up, the doors closed, they

never get out of their cars like the CDC [Center for Disease Control] recommends they do. There’s no exception to the United States Constitution for a pandemic. What Mayor Simmons has done is to apply an order without regard to equality and he’s singled out churches in particular.”

Another church in Greenville raided by police was the Temple Baptist Church. Temple Baptist member Lee Gordon recalled the scene. “We have everybody stay in their cars, with their windows up and go to a certain radio station, a low frequency station. The police started coming up and we said, ‘we think we’re within our rights.’ So they started issuing tickets, five hundred dollar tickets. I don’t know, it may have been twenty to thirty tickets.”

Gordon added, “Everybody got one. It wasn’t per car. Me and my wife was in a car together and both of us got tickets.”

De Blasio Orders No Protests Allowed

Religious assembly has not been the only form of liberty threatened with curtailment during the pandemic. De Blasio has also threatened anyone planning a protest against his authoritarian policies: “People who want to make their voices heard, there are plenty of ways to do it without gathering in person. Use all the other tools you have to get your point across but avoid anything that might put other people in harm’s way.”

De Blasio’s police commissioner, Dermot Shea, was fully supportive of the mayor’s dictates. While conceding that the right of people to gather, the right of free speech, and the right to protest have historically been held “in the highest regard in this country,” he said he was the bearer of “bad news,” which was “we’re in a pandemic and executive orders have been issued, these are laws that have been passed down through executive order to keep people alive, while we greatly, greatly respect the right of people to protest, there should not be protests taking place in the middle of a pandemic by gathering outside and putting people at risk.”

Of course, there are many objections that could be made to what has happened in localities as diverse as rural Mississippi and New York City. For one, Commissioner Shea should know that executive officials such as the mayor cannot make laws via executive orders. The purpose

AP Images

of an executive order is to make sure that laws that already exist are enforced, not to create new laws *ex nihilo*.

And, of course, the fundamental laws by which we are governed are found in constitutions, such as the U.S. Constitution and in the respective state constitutions. Any action taken by a mayor, governor, president, or any other executive official must conform to existing law. And legislative bodies, whether at the federal, state, or local level, cannot delegate legislative power to executives, as Congress has purported to do by delegating war powers and trade agreement powers to the president in recent years.

Writing in the *Second Treatise of Government*, English natural-rights scholar John Locke explained, “Absolute arbitrary power, or governing without settled standing laws, can neither of them consist with the ends of society and government.... It cannot be supposed that they should intend, had they a power so to do, to give to any one, or more, an absolute arbitrary power over their persons and estates, and put a force into the magistrate’s hand to execute his unlimited will arbitrarily upon them.”

Even legislators are bound by oaths they take to the U.S. Constitution and the

various state constitutions. So are judges.

In Texas, another state with a reputation for individualism, Dallas Civil District Judge Eric Moye ordered the jailing of salon owner Shelley Luther for ignoring a temporary restraining order, which prohibited her from operating her business, A La Mode hair studio. In addition to seven days in jail, he fined her \$500 for every day the salon remained open for business.

However, in a supposed display of leniency, Moye told Luther, “If you would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that your actions were selfish, putting your own interest ahead of those in the community in which you live,” he would drop the jail time.

Luther responded, “I have to disagree with you, sir, when you say that I’m selfish because feeding my kids is not selfish. I have hairstylists that are going hungry because they’d rather feed their kids. So, sir, if you think the law is more important than kids being fed, then please go ahead with your decision, but I’m not going to shut the salon.”

Interestingly, those shutting down businesses such as Luther’s have called business owners selfish if they object to being closed — and their income cut off — but that is easy to say if one is like Moye or

Mayor de Blasio, and one’s income continues in the midst of the shutdown orders.

Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) responded in a tweet, “Seven days in jail for cutting hair?? This is NUTS. And government officials don’t get to order citizens to apologize to them for daring to earn a living.”

The Purpose of Constitutions

This is the crux of the matter. At least in America, we expect government officials to keep us safe by punishing evildoers in society, and to protect our liberties. It is not a proper role of government to destroy a person’s business enterprise.

That is why we have constitutions — to limit government to its legitimate purposes. Constitutions exist not to restrict the people, but to restrict the governments that they have established. Theoretically, governments can only do what their constitution allows them to do, and if they are not held to those constitutional restrictions, at all times, there will always be a pretext by those who are intoxicated by power over people to circumvent any restrictions. James Madison discussed this

Jailed for earning income: Shelley Luther was jailed by a Dallas judge for disobeying his order to keep her hair salon closed during the lockdown in Texas. Luther told the judge that she and her employees needed income to feed their families.



AP Images

The argument has been made that the majority of the population favors the restrictions being imposed by power-hungry governors and mayors on businesses, individuals, and liberty in general. But liberty trumps democracy, regardless of what the majority wants to be done.

in *The Federalist*, No. 48, when he compared democracies, in which majorities are unrestrained, and our representative republic, which he contended the Constitution of the United States was establishing. “In a democracy,” Madison explained, “tyranny” will inevitably be imposed “on some favorable emergency.”

How state governments are presently responding to the pandemic is instructive. The argument has been made that the majority of the population favors the restrictions being imposed by power-hungry governors and mayors on businesses, individuals, and liberty in general. But liberty trumps democracy, regardless of what the majority wants to be done. Individuals should be allowed to conduct their own lives as they wish.

The precedent for our present situation, in which state and local governments have restricted the liberty of the individual — ignoring the clear wording found in the bills of rights of the respective states — in the name of protecting the common good, was established years ago, in various and sundry ways. Those advocating stricter gun laws always use this argument, regardless of what the Constitution clearly states about the right to self-defense.

But liberties do not come from the benevolence of government — hence government cannot undo them. As Judge Andrew Napolitano explains in his book *Constitutional Chaos*, “Natural Law theory teaches that the law extends from human nature, which is created by God. Thus, the Nat-

ural Law theory states that because all human beings desire freedom from artificial restraint and because all human beings yearn to be free, our freedoms stem from nature — from our very humanity — and ultimately from God.”

This view is clearly expressed by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, and it was a view shared by the Founders, in general. While Jefferson borrowed heavily from the ideas of Locke, such a position was not original with him,

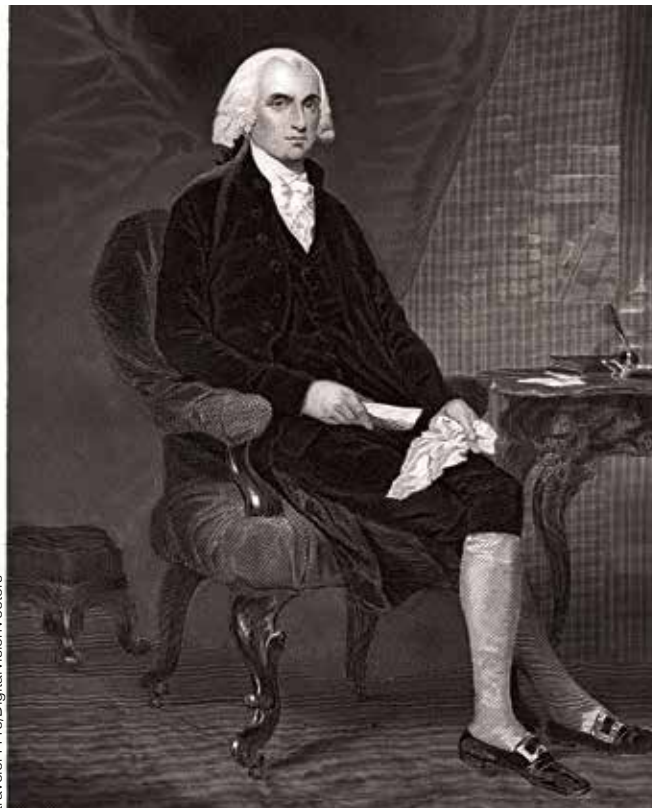
either. “St. Thomas Aquinas, the principal modern interpreter of Natural Law, directly contends that because God is perfectly free and humans are created in His image and likeness, our freedoms come from God,” Napolitano added. “The Founders held this same basic view.”

The Purpose of a Bill of Rights

As such, near the end of the Constitutional Convention, George Mason — who had been the chief architect of the Virginia Declaration of Rights — insisted that a bill of rights be added to the U.S. Constitution. He faced stiff opposition from most of the other delegates, including Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and Roger Sherman. Sherman lectured Mason that his fears were unfounded, as the rights of the people were well protected by the states themselves, eight of which had included a bill of rights in their own state constitutions. As the Constitution that had been crafted by the convention gave the new national government no power to address these rights, the new common or national government created by the convention could not restrict or add to them. They certainly could not endanger them.

But under pressure from the Constitution’s opponents, such as Mason and Patrick Henry, it was finally promised to multiple state ratifying conventions that a bill of rights would be added to the federal Constitution via the amendment process provided for in the document itself. The Bill of Rights, largely written by Madison, was adopted by Congress and ratified by the states by 1791.

Many today are not aware that a majority of the states, such as Virginia and Massachusetts, had already adopted their own listing of guaranteed rights — all restricting the power of their state governments. States added since the original 13 have also adopted their own bill of rights, or as some call them, “a declaration of rights.” In other words, they were “declaring” rights; they were not granting them.



traveler1116/DigitalVisionVectors

An attempt to guarantee liberties: James Madison opposed adding a bill of rights to the federal Constitution, arguing that the document had given the newly created national government no authority to violate the rights of its citizens. But in order to get the Constitution ratified, he promised — and he kept his promise — to write what we now call the American Bill of Rights.



BillOxford/E+/GettyImagesPlus

Just paper? The federal Constitution and the respective state constitutions were written to limit the powers of government, not the people. But as Virginia statesman John Randolph of Roanoke put it, its words mean nothing unless the people force the government to follow it.

Yet in Wisconsin in past weeks, the state enacted an order to citizens to stay at home, banning all “public and private gatherings” and crowds of more than 10. Wisconsin even mandated that individuals keep a distance of at least six feet from each other. So-called non-essential businesses were closed, with anyone daring to violate that order by illegally working facing a \$250 fine and up to 30 days in jail.

This would appear to be a direct violation of Article I, Section 4 of the Wisconsin Constitution: “The right of the people peaceably to assemble, to consult for the common good, and to petition the government, or any department thereof, shall *never* be abridged.” (Emphasis added.) Apparently, *never* has arrived in the Badger State and in several other states.

While Wisconsin did not become a state until well into the 19th century, the original states had similar statements in their own constitutions. The Massachusetts Constitution, adopted in 1780 and the world’s oldest functioning written constitution — drafted by John Adams — was actually a model for the U.S. Constitution written nearly a decade later. Adams stated the purpose of government in its preamble: “The end of the institution, maintenance, and administration of government, is to

secure the existence of the body politic, to protect it, and to furnish the individuals who compose it with the power of enjoying in safety and tranquility their *natural rights*.” (Emphasis added.)

In its “Declaration of Rights,” the Massachusetts Constitution stated, “No subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience.” It also stated, “The people have a right, in an orderly and peaceable manner, to assemble to consult upon the common good.”

Perhaps most relevant to our present situation, the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights added, “The power of suspending the laws, or the execution of the laws, ought never to be exercised but by the legislature, or by authority derived from it.” But as has already been stated earlier in this article, executive officials, including mayors and governors, believe they can make laws via executive orders. “The executive shall never exercise the legislative or judicial powers,” the Massachusetts Constitution adds, with the further stipulation that “the judicial shall never exercise the legislative and executive powers, or either of them: to the end

it may be a government of laws and not of men.”

Another power commonly prohibited in state constitutions is the power to take private property without just compensation. It could be reasonably argued that ordering private businesses to close (supposedly for the common good of society during a pandemic) is, in effect, the state taking private property, at least temporarily. Sadly, forced closures of business by government, ostensibly on a temporary basis, may as well be permanent in many cases, as the business owners cannot survive being out of business for weeks — and months — on end. Thousands of businesses across the land — created and grown over decades in some cases — have been destroyed by the heavy hand of government in a mere few weeks.

What Is Temporary Tyranny?

Of course, all of this is supposed to be “temporary.” When the German parliament gave Adolf Hitler dictatorial powers under the German Constitution’s Article 48, that was supposed to be “temporary,” as well. But now, as then, a slippery slope to despotism could begin at any time — there is always someone ready to rationalize away rights. And arguments claiming that religious liberty or the freedom to assemble are subject to “reasonable regulations” are the same arguments ordinarily made to justify circumventing the Second Amendment, a right that many liberals today would end in a heartbeat. What is next? How long will it be until someone argues that the permanent ending of religious services is needed to protect the public from the spread of disease? After all, congregants can watch services on the Internet.

The words in the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution are comforting to those who value liberty — as are the words found in the constitutions of the states. But as the great statesman John Randolph of Roanoke said, “I have no faith in parchment sir, I have no faith in the abracadabra of the Constitution.”

What he meant was that if we are not prepared to stand up and oppose those who blatantly disregard the words written down in our beloved constitutions — federal or state — those words become meaningless scribbles found on a piece of paper. ■

Judge Stands Against Lockdown Measures

The Associated Press reported on April 27 that a Virginia state judge issued a temporary injunction that allowed a gun range to remain open despite Governor Ralph Northam's executive order requiring its closure. In his opinion, Lynchburg Circuit Judge F. Patrick Yeatts stated that the governor had overstepped his authority under the state's emergency power legislation. Yeatts wrote that “the Governor appears to argue that, when he declares a state of emergency, he can ignore any law that limits his power, even laws designed to limit his powers in a state of emergency.” Yeatts further wrote that “during an emergency, the governor is given great deference, but [the statute] specifically limits his authority in relation to the right to keep and bear arms.... The purpose of the right is to have a population trained with firearms in order to defend the Commonwealth.... Proper training and practice at a range ... is fundamental to the right to keep and bear arms.... The Court understands the Governor's desire to protect the citizens of our great commonwealth.... But in taking steps to stop the spread of COVID-19, he took a step beyond what is allowed.”

This court decision was a result of a lawsuit by SafeSide gun range in Lynchburg, Virginia, that challenged Governor Northam's executive order that deemed gun ranges as nonessential. SafeSide gun range was also joined in its lawsuit by the Gun Owners of America, the Virginia Citizens Defense League, and the Association of Virginia Gun Ranges.

Democratic Attorney General Mark Herring argued on the governor's behalf that the measure that closed gun ranges was necessary “to protect public safety.” Herring was disappointed by the judge's ruling and said that he still supported the governor's actions. “Governor Northam's efforts to save lives and slow the spread of COVID-19 are necessary and proving to be effective, but unfortunately, the gun lobby believes the ability to shoot a gun indoors during this pandemic is worth risking further spread of the virus and making Virginia communities and families less safe,” Herring wrote in a prepared statement.

Governor Northam also held a press conference, where he said he was exploring all of his legal options to get the injunction overturned, and he reiterated that his goal is still to “promote and protect the health and safety of Virginians.... No particular business has been singled out.” Yeatts' order only applied to the SafeSide Lynchburg facility, but Philip Van Cleave, president of the Virginia Citizens Defense League, said his organization is still consulting with counsel about how to get similar legal protections for other gun ranges.

Open Carry Suspended in Jackson, Mississippi

While the preceding story might give gun owners hope, this story is a sad reminder that we need to be vigilant about the gun-grabbing actions of politicians who seek to use tragedies to steal our hard-won rights. WJTV reported on April 25 out of Mississippi that City of Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba issued an executive order that suspended the right of city residents to open carry their firearms within city limits. Mayor Lumumba rationalized the order by referencing recent shootings in which a five-year-old and an 11-year-old were killed, but Lumumba never addressed whether these shootings involved legal gun owners, nor was there any evidence that open-carry laws had any impact whatsoever in the crimes. But Lumumba seems oblivious to the fact that criminals don't comply with legal orders, which then have the effect of only restricting law-abiding citizens.

It is clear that, even in Jackson, criminals ignore laws: April was the deadliest month in the city's history, due to all of the criminal violence despite the fact that Mayor Lumumba issued a stay-at-home order for the entire month. WLBT reported that 14 people were killed during the month of April, which is the highest number based on Jackson Police Department reports compiled since 2016 and FBI records dating back 40 years before that. Criminals are simply ignoring Mayor Lumumba.

The Mississippi *Clarion Ledger* reported on April 27 that Republican Attorney General Lynn Fitch criticized Lumumba's

order and said that “cities can't usurp the authority of the state's elected Legislature and violate the constitutional rights of the people. I support the 2nd Amendment and will enforce the laws of this state.... I have serious concerns about the order and the burden it imposes upon Mississippians' constitutional right to possess firearms.”

While Mayor Lumumba's order might be temporary, he called for a repeal of the state's open-carry law and argued that the fatalities caused by the inner-city shootings “could have been avoided if we had state law that enabled us to better control the presence of firearms on our streets.” Lumumba explained his reasoning, saying that police were able to more easily stop suspected criminals and confiscate their guns prior to the implementation of the open-carry law, but he provided no actual evidence to support this claim. Lumumba stated in his video message that “prior to the open-carry law, when Jackson officers saw a gun in plain view, it gave them the probable cause to seize the weapon and determine whether it was an illegal weapon or not. The open-carry law not only provides protection to individuals who are armed with illegal weapons, it creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the community. We cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the fact that the open-carry law has led an increase in gun violence into our communities.”

Lumumba then encouraged his supporters to sign a petition that demands the repeal of the state law permitting open carry. “While this order will only be in effect for a short period of time, I am calling on all Jackson residents, and all state and local leaders to act in the interest of our innocent children. Repeal the open-carry law which makes it impossible for law enforcement to root out illegal firearms on our streets. How many babies do we have to bury to appease someone's desire to open carry?”

The mayor's move might have been one planned to generate interest and hopefully go viral, but as of the writing of this column, the petition only had a little over a hundred signatures, despite the fact that Jackson has nearly 165,000 residents and there are almost three million people living in Mississippi. ■

— PATRICK KREY



Removing Regulatory Barriers Essential for Fighting Coronavirus, Rebooting Economy

ITEM: *The New York Times* for May 2 ran a piece entitled “The New Great Depression Is Coming. Will There Be a New New Deal?,” with a subtitle that declared: “After the coronavirus, political transformation may be inevitable.” The “need to rebuild the country comes with opportunities,” asserted opinion columnist Michelle Goldberg.

“At this point,” she pronounced, “even many Republicans acknowledge that the era of small government is over. (‘Big-Government Conservatives Mount Takeover of G.O.P.’ said a recent *Politico* headline.) In such an environment, ambitious progressive ideas that once seemed implausible, at least in the short term, start to become more imaginable.”

The *Times* columnist continued: “I do think there’s an F.D.R. moment,” said Senator Edward Markey, Democrat of Massachusetts and co-author of the Green New Deal resolution, which calls for a huge new public works program to build environmentally sustainable infrastructure. “... we can see that it is now time to discuss universal child care, universal sick leave and a guaranteed income for everyone in our society.”

ITEM: The Center for American Progress (CAP) is a leading left-wing Washington think tank that was founded by John Podesta, former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton, who still serves on its board. The CAP is, according to the *Wall Street Journal* (May 2-3), among those groups preparing for a rollback of regulatory changes “if former Vice President Joe Biden wins the presidency and Democrats control Congress.” The center has acknowledged it has been making such plans.

A CAP paper, “Oversight and Implementation Will Determine the Effectiveness of the New Laws Responding to Coronavirus,” dated April 27, points to one of its concerns — the alleged “lack of oversight and accountability” in the funding of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Se-



AP Images

Pandemic pain: This photo of McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas on May 9 illustrates well the economic devastation that reactions to the coronavirus have caused. Essentially, the lockdowns have meant layoffs, unemployment, and bankruptcies.

curity (CARES) Act, saying this “opens the door to misuse and corruption.”

ITEM: *The New York Times*, in an April 27 article entitled “Job or Health? Restarting the Economy Threatens to Worsen Economic Inequality,” raised a recurrent theme of progressives of late: growing “inequality.” The gist of the article penned by Jim Tankersley is seen in the subtitle: “The coronavirus recession has exacerbated the racial and income divides in America. Lifting restrictions too soon will make them worse.”

That inequality bogeyman is also at the center of a Bloomberg Businessweek piece on May 4, “Will the Virus Make Inequality Worse?” Here is the article’s “Bottom Line”: “Inequality in the U.S. was already at a record before the outbreak.... But if America stays on a war footing, it could improve.” Lest you wonder what that “war” might entail, the article happily reminds us what happens when “an entire economy mobilizes for war: The U.S.’s first income tax was imposed in the Civil War, and the top tax rate hit 77% during World War I and 94% in World War II.”

CORRECTION: Americans are born equal. It’s our job, which is not an easy one, to outgrow that. Some people make good, while some make trouble. And others just make up excuses.

This brings us to leftist political and media elitists. They would utilize the coronavirus as a pretext to inflict more onerous regulations, taxation, and controls on our freedoms. Well-rehearsed worries disseminated by prophets of doom about “inequality” are pretenses, ruses with ulterior motives.

Meanwhile, such defeatists are willing — nay eager — to rewrite history if it will serve their purposes. Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) recently told MSNBC that his political opponents reminded him of “old Herbert Hoovers,” who (supposedly) just wanted to “wait out” the Great Depression, but matters still “got worse and worse.” Said the senator, “We need Franklin Rooseveltian-type action.”

That’s a legend. And false. Hoover’s government was in fact quite extravagant. And candidate Roosevelt railed against Hoover as “the greatest spender in history” and complained about the GOP for piling “bureau on bureau, commission on commission ... at the expense of the taxpayer.” However, once in office, FDR immediately reversed course and “set off to build a government that in size dwarfed the government of Hoover which he denounced,” as noted by John T. Flynn in his book *The Roosevelt Myth*.



Correction, Please!

Steve Forbes, in his eponymous magazine (*Forbes*, May 2020), correctly recalled that Hoover's "unprecedented government activism" was followed by even more interventionism by FDR. And the "crisis persisted."

In fact, after World War II, as Forbes wrote,

fear of a renewed downturn led many to cry for more Hoover/FDR-like policies. Instead, we did the opposite: The budget was ruthlessly axed, income taxes for couples were effectively halved, wartime controls were rapidly eliminated, the New Deal's anti-commerce labor laws were modified and the dollar remained fixed to gold. Even though millions of veterans rapidly returned to the workforce, unemployment remained low.

We must, he wrote, "take these experiences to heart" today.

Facing a deadly pandemic, just getting regulatory impediments out of the way may have been the best thing the federal government could do. And, astonishingly, that is largely what has been happening. (Why the blockades were there in the first place is another matter.)

The Trump administration's non-seizure of power during an emergency was a matter stressed (and praised) by Christopher DeMuth — a fellow at the Hudson Institute — but certainly not by the left-wing media.

Deregulatory actions have incensed the Left. Accordingly, these measures have become targets should their Democratic political allies take power. Here's their related, albeit illogical, gripe: How dare Trump show leadership by not acting as the dictator we accused him of being?!

The "most striking" aspect of the Trump administration's anti-virus responses, wrote DeMuth, has been

its waiving or liberalizing of hundreds of regulatory requirements that would otherwise impede efforts to cope with the epidemic and ensuing shutdowns. The Food and Drug Administration has relaxed its extreme restrictions on the development and deployment of medical tests, equipment, drugs and vaccines. The Medicare and [HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996)] waivers, along with the suspension by many states of their restrictions on out-of-state medi-

cal professionals, are allowing doctors and nurses to go where they are needed and to practice telemedicine. The Education Department is easing its micromanagement of school districts to facilitate online teaching and other initiatives.

The general intent has been to sidestep federal bureaucracies and allow local and state governments, who know their constituencies best, to handle the details.

Several conservative-leaning groups have been tracking the rules that have been either suspended or relaxed during the crisis. The idea is to "sunset" such regulations.

Experts at the Mercatus Center have suggested an approach that they call the Fresh Start Initiative. It is modeled after the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission that has helped to close 350 outdated military bases over multiple rounds since 1988. The proposed body would identify and study revised or suspended rules during the virus crisis and make recommendations for each to be terminated or reformed. The object is to create "a plan and timetable for automatically sunsetting or comprehensively reforming those policies or programs as part of a single reform package."

Illustrating the extent of the vast regulatory regime — a veritable fantasy for statisticians — Mercatus points to the findings of the RegData Project. That project's most recent data indicate that the volume of federal regulations has increased dramatically in the last half-century. The numbers of regulatory restrictions on the books have gone from around 400,000 in 1970 to more than 1,000,000 currently.

This is the mountain that has to be scaled before there can be, among others, treatments and vaccines. John Goodman — president of the Goodman Institute for Public Policy Research and a senior fellow at the Independent Institute — describes some of the obstacles that faced the Trump administration. As Goodman has written, until just a few months ago:

The only tests for the coronavirus that were approved for use in the



The man, the myth: Many Americans still believe the myth that when FDR got into office he used big spending to bring the country out of the Great Depression, but his programs locked us into it. Only after WWII, when the programs were lifted, did the country flourish.



AP Images

Never letting a crisis go to waste: Every time there is a major crisis in the country, big-government politicians pledge to fix the problems with new laws and bureaucracy, “fixes” that limit the freedoms of Americans, such as the installation of the TSA after 9/11.

United States were produced by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and half of those tests turned out to be defective.

It was illegal to produce, sell and distribute ventilators, respirators, and other medical equipment without complicated and burdensome government regulatory permission.

It was also illegal to produce, sell and distribute personal protective equipment such as masks, gowns, gloves, etc.

Medicare actually dictated how many beds a hospital could have and no one could create additional beds anywhere without government permission.

In addition, according to Goodman,

In most cases, it was illegal for doctors to practice across state lines — consulting with patients in states where they had not been licensed to practice.

It was illegal for employers and insurers to waive the deductibles and copayments for coronavirus detection and treatment for the 26 million families with Health Savings Accounts (HSAs).

Medicare refused to pay for doc-

tor consultations by means of phone, email, or Skype — except under special circumstances.

Medicare refused to pay for direct primary care services (concierge care) that would give patients 24/7 access to a physician, including contact by phone, email, and video at nights and on weekends.

It was illegal for employers to put money into an HSA so that employees could choose their own direct primary care physician.

There were many more roadblocks. Then a deadly pandemic hit and urgent action was needed. Such impediments “to sensible virus responses,” as Goodman said, are largely gone. For now.

The Left, you see, wants to bring back such lethal “protections.” In the past, major crises produced government power grabs and left a legacy of additional bureaucracy. As noted by Veronique de Rugy in a *Reason* column, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001,

the federal government created the Department of Homeland Security and a centralized airport security agency, the Transportation Security Administration. Oh, and don’t for-

get about the Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act, which expanded many other government powers.

Similar growth in government occurred after the Great Recession. For instance, the federal government created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Financial Stability Oversight Council, the Federal Insurance Office, and many other bureaucracies and programs meant to prevent the next financial crisis. Uncle Sam also accumulated more control over the extension of credit, both mortgage and personal.

As might be expected, the virus outbreak also led to calls for more bureaucracy. Rahm Emanuel, the former mayor of Chicago and White House chief of staff for President Barack Obama, did just that (in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed earlier this year). What is needed, he insisted, is a Cabinet-level executive department that would coordinate the national response in the event of future pandemics.

As part of his argument for a new bureau, Emanuel blamed Donald Trump for Washington’s “lack of urgency in the early weeks.” Never mind that Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, assuredly told Americans — on NBC’s *Today* show as late as February 29, for one example — that the risk from COVID-19 “is still low,” and that “at this moment, there’s no need to change anything that you’re doing on a day-by-day basis.”

Brian Riedl, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, calculates that over a decade, the coronavirus recession is projected to add nearly \$8 trillion to the National Debt. That tab, as he notes, is more than the cost of the entire budgets of the Department of Defense “over the past 12 years combined.”

In this war, the short-run goals are to overcome the coronavirus and free the economy. For a durable peace, we also need a much leaner government and long-term regulatory relief. ■

— WILLIAM P. HOAR

BY WILLIAM F. JASPER

Dear Costco, **Here's My Membership Card. Stuff it!**

On May 4, retail giant Costco began requiring all employees and customers to wear face masks while inside their stores.

Costco President and CEO Craig Jelinek cited the constantly changing, draconian, and much-contested CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidelines for the company's position. Costco and other big corporations that have been deemed "essential businesses" have weathered the shut-down just fine, but millions of small, medium, and large independent businesses are being destroyed, along with millions of jobs and livelihoods. Even worse, many of the biggest proponents of the oppressive China-style lockdowns/crackdowns are now admitting what many of us had warned from the outset of the virus outbreak, that the "cure" may be worse than the disease. The United Nations World Food Program is now warning that, as a result of the economic devastation caused by COVID restriction, many more people are at risk of death from starvation worldwide than from the virus itself.

With these and other horrendous impacts in mind, this writer decided that one small effort that could be undertaken as an individual would be to help initiate an exodus of informed consumers from those businesses that are buying into and promoting the destructive hysteria that is sounding the death knell for human freedom. Thus, in an open letter to Costco, I wrote: "Dear Costco, Here's My Membership Card. Please Stuff it!... along with your Maoist mandatory facemask policy. Please refund the pro rata portion of my membership dues, along with my Executive Member annual rebate."

Although I have been a Costco executive member for over a decade, I was growing increasingly disturbed by the store's steady expansion in the amount of foodstuffs from China — which I will never buy (and refused to buy even before the Wuhan virus).

But, really, going "Full Wuhan" with the mandatory face-masks? That exceeds even the autocratic commands of the CDC and most of the Chicken Little politicians at the state and local levels. "What's next?" I asked. "Mandatory proof of COVID vaccine before entering a COSTCO market? My neighbor, a mother of three youngsters, was turned away from one of your stores because you have placed a group limit of three on shoppers. Are we to assume that this is to conform with Communist China's current Two Child policy? And, if the



AP Images

Chinese Communist Party (CCP) decides to revert to its murderous, barbaric One Child policy, should we expect Costco to likewise revise its policies to conform with the latest CCP edict?"

Is calling Costco's face-mask policy "Maoist" hyperbolic? Not at all. Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the mass-murdering founder of the People's Republic of China, has been re-elevated to god-like status in the PRC's current communist dictatorship under Xi Jinping. And Xi's servile propagandists are being given prestige plat-

forms to spread Maoist thought in America.

Take for example, an interview with Dr. Shan Soe-Lin entitled "Americans may need to wear masks for up to 18 months, Yale expert says," widely disseminated by Yahoo! News and other sites. Dr. Shan, a Chinese immunologist who teaches at Yale University, is one of thousands of Chinese researchers chosen by the CCP to flood American universities.

"I think people are going to have to wear masks until there's a vaccine. I mean that to be completely blunt," Shan declared. "I think the next best would be through the end of the epidemic. It definitely needs to be moving past peak." "It's a big cultural thing to have to reverse here..." Dr. Shan said. "It's just not a norm that's done and it's a norm that needs to change in a really trying time."

Yes, "It's a big cultural thing to have to reverse here." Are we allowed to recognize an undisguised appeal to Mao's mass-murdering Cultural Revolution here in Shan's statement? As the CDC, Costco, and other businesses promote the "China model" in dealing with the CCP coronavirus, we can be certain that Dr. Shan and her comrades populating our colleges and universities will be trotted out again and again to pronounce the new edicts that our globalist leaders insist we must adopt as "the new norm" for America. In terms of sickness and death, the actual CCP virus has cut a devastating swath through America. The far greater devastation, however, is that inflicted by the CCP virus of Maoist thought, which is conditioning us to cower in fear and allow ourselves to be herded as sheeple or mindless automatons.

Costco certainly will survive my departure as a member/patron, just as I certainly will find other stores that will take my money and provide the goods and services I want — without subjecting me to Beijing-style commands. If your freedom means more to you than the latest Made-in-China sale item, maybe you'll join me in sending Costco — and other kowtowing corporations — the message: Stuff it! ■

William F. Jasper is senior editor of THE NEW AMERICAN.

FEATURED PRODUCTS



Dangers of Democratic Socialism — SLIM JIM

Help educate people about the dangers of “Democratic Socialism.” (2020, sold in packs of 25, 1/\$3.00ea; 2-4/\$2.50ea; 5+/\$2.00ea)

\$3.00
SJDDS



Americanism vs. Globalism — SLIM JIM

What is Americanism? Get people involved in our liberty movement! (2020, sold in packs of 25, 1/\$3.00ea; 2-4/\$2.50ea; 5+/\$2.00ea)

\$3.00
SJAVG



The Deep State's War on America — SLIM JIM

Let's drain the swamp! Educate your friends and neighbors on the dangers of the Deep State. (2020, sold in packs of 25, 1/\$3.00ea; 2-4/\$2.50ea; 5+/\$2.00ea)

\$3.00
SJDSWA



Protect the Electoral College — SLIM JIM

Let everyone know about the importance of keeping the Electoral College, to protect the minority from the majority. (2020, sold in packs of 25, 1/\$3.00ea; 2-4/\$2.50ea; 5+/\$2.00ea)

\$3.00
SJPEC



Freedom Is the Cure — SLIM JIM

Encourage people to take a stand and help JBS to restore our rights and freedoms lost during this COVID-19 virus shutdown! (2020, sold in packs of 25, 1/\$3.00ea; 2-4/\$2.50ea; 5+/\$2.00ea)

\$3.00
SJFIC



Freedom Is the Cure — YARD SIGN

Spread the word and show your support for our Freedom Is the Cure campaign by displaying this sign in your yard. Corrugated plastic, double-sided, 18" X 24" — includes 24" X 10" wire stake. (1/\$14.95, 2-4/\$13.95ea, 5-9/\$12.95ea, 10+/\$12.45ea)

\$14.95
YSFIC



Freedom Is the Cure — BUMPER STICKER

Get others involved by influencing them with this bumper sticker. (1-9/\$1.00ea; 10-25/\$0.85ea; 26-99/\$0.75ea; 100-999/\$0.50ea; 1000+/\$0.45ea)

\$1.00
BSFIC



Constitutional Principles — BOOKLET SET

Three of the most important topics regarding the Constitution — the Electoral College, a Constitutional Convention, and Article VI — are explained from a constitutionalist viewpoint in these three booklets. Understanding these topics is key to becoming an informed voter and responsible citizen. (2018, 1-4/\$6.95ea; 5-9/\$5.95ea; 10+/\$4.95ea)

\$6.95
SETBKLTSC

Go to ShopJBS.org or call 1-800-342-6491 to order!

200608



PRISM MANAGEMENT

PRISM: Any medium that resolves a seemingly simple matter into its elements

CONSULTANTS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Specializing in Tax Deductions for Dental Practices • Post Office Box 7007 • Porter Ranch, CA 91327