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**A Permanent
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THE NEW AMERICAN

ISS 14 JULY 31 2023 \$3.95US&CAN



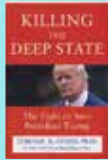


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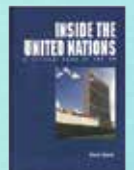


America and the United Nations — Booklet

This analysis of the United Nations traces its history from its forerunner, the League of Nations, to the present, and compares the basic foundational documents of the UN with those of the United States with regard to the protection of human rights. (2022, 45pp, 1-9/\$3.95ea; 10-24/\$3.00ea; 25-49/\$2.50ea; 50-99/\$2.00ea; 100+/\$1.75ea) **BKLTAAUN**

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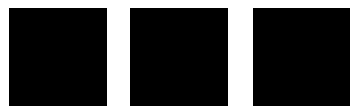
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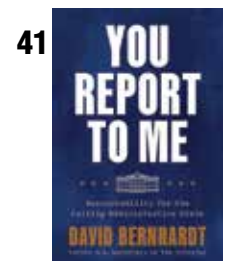
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The Deep State and BlackRock

The globe-straddling vampire squid depicted on the cover of this magazine must strike some prospective readers as over-the-top conspiracy theory.

Others undoubtedly find in the jarring imagery a reasonable representation of the global power grab that would-be masters of the universe are scheming to achieve both inside and outside of government.

And still others surely find themselves somewhere in between these two conflicting viewpoints. They may be asking themselves the extent to which the cover imagery depicts reality, as well as the extent to which the facts either support or undermine this depiction.

Of course, our cover makes immediately obvious where the *The New American* stands. But this does not mean we accept as true baseless “conspiracy theories.” One whopper of a conspiracy theory this magazine has warned against from the beginning is the once-widely believed, but now completely discredited, claim that Donald Trump colluded with Vladimir Putin, who installed his puppet in the White House.

But not all conspiracy theories are false or baseless. There are also conspiracy theories that may or may not have some truth to them, but for which there is insufficient evidence to draw a firm conclusion one way or the other. And there are so-called conspiracy theories that can be shown to be true based on the evidence.

Put simply, there are conspiracy theories and conspiracy facts. This magazine relies on the facts to draw its conclusions, and the cover story in this issue is no exception.

Overwhelming evidence that continues to mount shows that the Deep State, by which is meant an unelected hidden government behind the elected visible government of the United States, does exist. The evidence also shows that Deep State-associated swamp creatures inhabit much more than just the entrenched federal bureaucracy and the intelligence community. Their habitats also include world-government-promoting nongovernmental entities such as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, and the World Economic Forum, which exert great influence over government policy both in the United States and globally. And they include the worlds of big business and big

finance, where the corporate leviathan known as BlackRock is so dominant.

Over the years, *The New American* has time and again provided evidence exposing the Deep State and its machinations. But what, you might ask, does BlackRock have to do with those machinations? That is the subject of this issue’s cover story, “BlackRock: Masters of the Universe,” by Alex Newman.

It is certainly indisputable that BlackRock wields immense financial clout. As Alex points out in his article, BlackRock is managing an estimated \$10 trillion. “For perspective,” he observes, “that is more than the gross domestic product (GDP) of every country on the planet except the United States and Communist China.” But there is much more to it than that.

In a letter to CEOs, BlackRock chairman and CEO Larry Fink explained how, “as stewards of our clients’ capital, we ask businesses to demonstrate how they’re going to deliver on their responsibility to shareholders, including through sound environmental, social, and governance practices and policies.”

Well, that’s one way of putting it. The giant squid’s tentacles of control and influence and its ESG policies have much to do with lesser squids performing as they are “asked” — even if this means championing “woke” causes customers reject, as in the case of Bud Light or Target.

And there is much more still, including what can and must be done.

Whether or not you believe that there’s a Deep State, that it’s working against the interests of the American people, and that BlackRock is playing a central role likely depends on your own familiarity with the evidence. So if you have not already done so, we recommend you become familiar with the evidence supporting these assertions, so that you can draw your own conclusions, rather than being unwittingly swayed by mainstream media imagemakers who dismiss out of hand “conspiracy theories” they disagree with, while peddling their own false narratives such as the Putin-Trump collusion hoax.

Regarding BlackRock specifically, we encourage everyone to read Alex’s fact-filled article.

— Gary Benoit



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"This is a republic, not a democracy — Let's keep it that way!"

Bolsonaro Banned From Politics for Eight Years



AP Images

According to a June 30 report by CNN, a seven-judge panel in Brazil has prohibited former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, the leader of the center-right Liberal Party, from running for office until 2030, thereby killing his chances of a 2026 challenge to President Luiz Inacio “Lula” da Silva of the left-wing Workers’ Party, to whom Bolsonaro lost in 2022 by the narrowest margin in decades.

Bolsonaro claimed that the election system in that race was compromised by hackers, and that voting machines automatically

filled out ballots for the Workers’ Party. In July 2022, Bolsonaro repeated to foreign ambassadors his claims of voter fraud, and this prompted another left-wing party, the Democratic Labor Party, to file a lawsuit against him. The party called on the Superior Electoral Tribunal (TSE) to ban Bolsonaro from running again, which the court did on June 30.

“This is an injustice against me.... Show me something concrete I have done against democracy. Perhaps my crime was doing the right thing for four years,” Bolsonaro said of the TSE’s ruling. He said he will appeal the decision, but even if he succeeds, there are more cases against him pending at the TSE, any one of which could result in another ban.

Ironically, Lula himself was banned after a conviction for taking bribes in 2017. His conviction was annulled by Brazil’s Supreme Court in March 2021, however, allowing him to successfully run against Bolsonaro and stage his own political comeback, returning to the presidency 12 years after having left the office.

However, Lula served prison time for his bribery charges and was never cleared of wrongdoing. The Supreme Court merely held that the lower court that convicted him, in the state of Parana, did not have jurisdiction, so he must be tried in Brasilia, where he lived at the time of his alleged crimes. CNN noted that the judge did not rule on whether Lula was guilty or not, but simply annulled the cases to be retried in Brasilia, where Lula could be convicted again.

NYC Now Taking Care of More Migrants Than Homeless

New York City’s Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom announced during a press briefing on June 28 that, for the first time, the number of asylum-seeking migrants being taken care of by the city has surpassed the number of homeless New York residents under municipal care.

Fox News reported on June 28 that New York City is presently looking after more than 50,000 migrants — a figure Williams-Isom said is “unsustainable.” “You see from today’s numbers that we have reached a tipping point,” she said. “We now have more asylum seekers in our care than longtime New Yorkers ... in our existing ... system.” Referring to the situation as a “humanitarian crisis,” Williams-Isom wants the federal government to alleviate the city’s woes by sending monetary aid and material resources.

The week of June 19 saw 2,500 more migrants taken in by the city, she said. NYC has accepted responsibility for more than 81,200 migrants since spring 2022, and to meet the huge demand, the city has created 12 Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers and 176 shelter sites. An extension of contracts for 10 navigation sites (and the opening of an 11th) alone will be costing New Yorkers an additional \$2.3 million.

To deal with the flood of migrants, Democratic Mayor Eric Adams has been transporting migrants out of the city to other counties, other states, and even other countries — though he has

criticized Republican-led states such as Texas and Florida for doing the same thing.

Ironically, New York is a sanctuary city, meaning it shields illegal migrants from deportation and prosecution instead of cooperating with federal immigration enforcement authorities such as ICE. Now the Big Apple is having to confront the reality of what being a sanctuary city really means.

It’s a fitting turn of events. Perhaps if more communities were forced to live with the consequences of the leftist immigration policies they claim to support on paper, they would quickly change their tune.



AP Images

Biology Professor Fired for Teaching Biology

The *New York Post* reported on June 23 that Dr. Johnson Varkey, a college biology professor at St. Philip's College in San Antonio, Texas, was fired from his position for teaching that sex is determined by X and Y chromosomes.

On November 2, 2022, Varkey began his human biology class, covering the topic of the human reproductive system. In his nearly 20 years of teaching, he had covered the material many times without incident. But on this particular day, four enraged students stormed out in the middle of his lecture.

According to a June 23 statement from his legal team at the First Liberty Institute, Varkey had “stated, consistent with his study of human biology and religious beliefs, that sex was determined by chromosomes X and Y.” His attorneys pointed out that “in two decades of teaching these basic, unremarkable concepts, no other students complained.” However, these concepts offended the four pupils, who turned the professor in to school administration for discrimination, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, and “religious preaching.”

In January, the Alamo Colleges District Human Resources Department sent Varkey an email warning him of an investigation. He received a notice of termination on January 27.

According to Varkey's attorneys, that email included no examples, but stated only that his “teaching was offensive and unacceptable.” However, in this age of transgender hysteria, “offensive and unacceptable” is enough to ruin the career of a 20-year veteran biology professor.

In a late June letter to the school demanding Varkey's rein-

statement, First Liberty noted that “During Dr. Varkey's 20-year employment as a biology professor at St. Philip's College, he consistently received exemplary performance reviews and was never subject to discipline. Throughout that time, he never discussed with any student his personal views — religious or otherwise — on human gender or sexuality.”

It should be noted that the National Library of Medicine, an arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, identifies the X and Y chromosomes as the two sex chromosomes. Repeating this information is what got Varkey fired.



Christoph Burgstedt/Stock/Getty Images Plus

Big Apple Takes Aim at Pizzerias

Historic New York City pizza joints could be forced to pony up thousands of dollars under a proposed city regulation aimed at reducing air pollution, as pizzerias with coal- or wood-fired ovens are being targeted by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the exhaust from their chimneys.

According to a June 25 *New York Post* article, “Restaurants with coal-and-wood-fired ovens must hire an engineer or architect to assess the feasibility of installing emission controls devices to achieve a 75% reduction in particulate emissions. If this report

concludes that a reduction of 75% or more cannot be achieved, or that no emissions controls can be installed, it must identify any emission controls that could provide a reduction of at least 25% or an explanation for why no emission controls can be installed.”

The new rule was enacted pursuant to a 2015 city ordinance signed by then-Mayor Bill de Blasio and drafted in consultation with “environmental justice groups.”

Paul Giannone, owner of Paulie Gee's Pizzeria in Brooklyn, tried to get ahead of the mandate by installing an air scrubber in the chimney of his wood-fired oven. Since 2018, Fox News reported on June 26, he's spent \$20,000. And there is no end in sight, as in addition to engineering, plumbing, and installation costs and the cost of the machine itself, there is costly ongoing maintenance.

The pizza rule is expected to affect fewer than 100 businesses, according to the DEP. “I don't know how much of a difference a hundred places is going to make,” Giannone told Fox News. “It's a drop in the ocean.”

In fact, compared to the amount of carbon spewed by President Joe Biden's “climate czar,” John Kerry, it's microscopic. In a June 26 *New York Post* op-ed, Climate Depot's Marc Morano calculated that one would have to burn a wood-fired oven continuously for 849 years to churn out the same amount of carbon dioxide that Kerry's private jet produces in a single year. ■

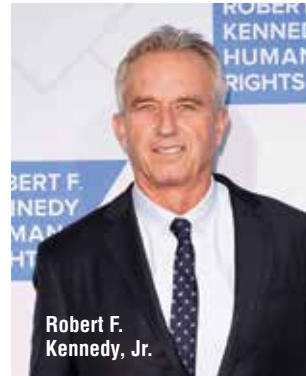


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RFK, Jr. Accuses Mainstream Media of “Manipulating” the Public

“The mainstream media that is here today is going to report that I have paranoid conspiracy theories, which is what they always say. But I’m just going to tell you facts. When the press believes it is their job to protect you from damaging information, they are manipulating you.”

Speaking before a libertarian group in Lancaster, New Hampshire, as he seeks the Democratic Party’s presidential nomination in 2024, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. repeated his vaccine skepticism and his belief that the CIA killed his uncle, President John F. Kennedy, in 1963.



AP Images

Doctors Start a Campaign to Have Local Baseball Team Change Its Name

“Leftists are now attacking a collegiate summer league baseball team known as the Macon Bacon.” Local Macon reporter **Shawn Ankrom** pointed to area doctors who recommend shunning bacon and urge the Macon Bacon to change its name to the Macon Facon Bacon while also promoting plant-based bacon alternatives such as Facon Bacon or Mushroom Bacon.

Beer Retailer Discusses Customer Reaction to Bud Light’s Promotion of LGBTQ

“At this point Bud Light is cheaper than some of the cases of water we’re selling, down 45 percent from a year ago. It’s just not moving like it used to. I’ve seen longtime Bud Light customers try other beers. If they find something they like, they may not come back to Bud Light.”

Over the past two decades, Bud Light has been America’s best-selling beer, notes Andy Wagner. An 18-year employee of a popular beverage store in Lemoyne, Pennsylvania, Wagner has seen customers’ rejection of the beer firsthand.



AP Images

Clarence Thomas

Supreme Court Justice States Why He Voted to Cancel Affirmative Action at Harvard and N.C. State

“Racialism simply cannot be undone by different or more racialism. The solution is incorporated in our Constitution, that we are all equal, and should be treated equally before the law without regard to our race.”

Justice Clarence Thomas is perhaps the strongest defender of the U.S. Constitution on our nation’s Supreme Court.

Princeton Senior Claims On-campus Liberalism Pushes Freethinkers to the Right

“All students should welcome challenges to their most cherished beliefs. But from what I’ve seen on campus, students are not invited to debate; they are expected to conform.”

Adam Hoffman is a senior at Princeton University and a former editor-in-chief of the Princeton Tory. He claims that numerous students have adopted conservative views when professors demand adherence to liberal nostrums.

Florida Congressman Likens Durham Report to the Always-losing Washington Generals

“It seems to me that your investigation is similar to the game played by the Washington Generals who are paid to show up every night to play the Harlem Globetrotters, and their job is to lose.”

Questioning Special Counsel John Durham after the release of his probe into any possible corruption within the Justice Department, Representative Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) expressed sharp disappointment with the failure of the Durham probe to expose the true core of the corruption it was supposed to expose. He maintained that the Durham effort tried all along “to go at it another way.” ■

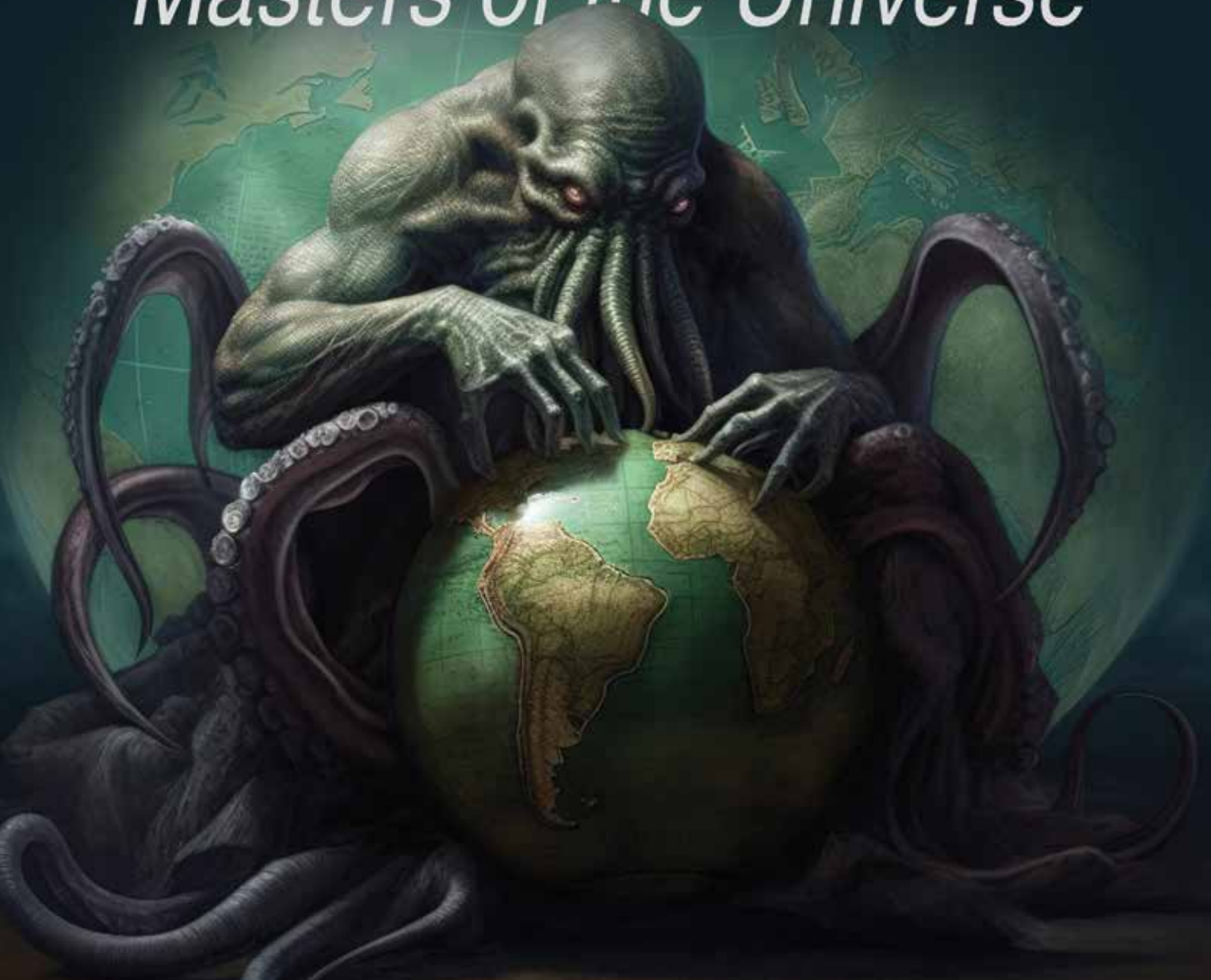
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BLACKROCK

Masters of the Universe



The financial monolith known as BlackRock has an estimated \$10 trillion under management and is using its clout to change the world — but not for the better.

by Alex Newman

Despite what you may have heard, it *is* about much more than “money.” It always has been.

The recent cultural transformation of corporate America — think Bud Light, Target, and Disney as some of the more recent examples — has shocked traditional Americans to the core. Suddenly, it seems that every major company in the nation has gone “woke,” promoting everything from man-made global-warming alarmism and “transgender” mutilation of children’s genitals to godless globalism and vicious race-mongering. It is all happening under the guise of improving “Environmental, Social, Governance” (ESG) scores and “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” (DEI) metrics.

Customers hate it, of course, as many companies facing boycotts and steep financial penalties have learned the hard way. So do shareholders, managers, and employees. Yet, despite being a money loser and despite the endless “Go Woke, Go Broke” chorus chanted by conservatives, more and more companies and brands are jumping on the “woke” bandwagon, apparently oblivious to the catastrophic damage they are doing to their brands. But there is more to the story; a simple explanation to the madness is lurking just beneath the surface.

Behind the scenes, quietly, there is a vast power responsible for pushing all this “woke” corporate fanaticism. It has a name: BlackRock. The world’s largest asset manager, the corporate giant has an estimated \$10 trillion under management. For perspective, that is more than the gross domestic product (GDP) of every country on the planet except the United States and Communist China. When the overlord of it all orders lesser mortals running Fortune 500 companies to jump in his annual “letter to CEOs,” business leaders around the world stand at attention and ask, “How high, sir?”

Journalist Matt Taibbi famously referred to Goldman Sachs in a 2010 *Rolling Stone* article as a “great vampire squid wrapped

Alex Newman is a senior editor of The New American, author of Deep State: The Invisible Government Behind the Scenes, and co-author (with the late Sam Blumenfeld) of Crimes of the Educators.

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Base of operations: BlackRock headquarters in Manhattan is the nerve center of the asset manager weaponizing trillions of dollars of Americans’ money to turn corporations “woke” on the path to a New World Order.

around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money.” But as the largest stakeholder in the great vampire squid from hell, BlackRock, while less well known than its diabolical cephalopod minion, is now orders of magnitude more important in both business and politics. It is the Grand Poohbah of all the vampire squids, to borrow Taibbi’s language.

The power of this corporate leviathan is unfathomable. It owns more than five percent of most S&P 500 companies, according to CNBC. And its tentacles extend to every corner of the global economy. In fact, along with State Street and Vanguard, BlackRock is among the largest stakeholders in most of the major companies you can name. It frequently is the largest stake-

holder in companies that compete against each other, too.

In a three-part exposé of the financial monolith, independent journalist James Corbett of the *Corbett Report* begins with a thought experiment. In his scenario, you start by shopping at Walmart, where BlackRock is one of the top stakeholders. Then you buy some Coke, another company in which BlackRock dominates. Then you get your Moderna shot — again BlackRock is there with about a seven-percent stake. Next you fill up at Exxon, and again, BlackRock is there. Finally, frustrated, you decide to lock yourself in your house and do your shopping on Amazon, and *again*, BlackRock owns one of the largest stakes.

Once it buys these huge positions,

BlackRock makes clear that the firm *will* go woke. Worst of all, perhaps, this evil imposed on companies is being advanced with *your* money. Despite the protests of investors, political leaders, and even institutions with massive amounts of money invested with BlackRock, the firm dutifully votes the shares that its clients technically own to promote the “woke” agenda. Indeed, the threat to board members who resist that they will be ousted from their lucrative posts looms large over corporate board meetings everywhere.

BlackRock Chairman and CEO Larry Fink has bragged repeatedly about what he is doing with your money. “Behaviors are going to have to change, and this is one thing that we are asking companies,” Fink declared during a 2017 discussion hosted by *The New York Times*. “You have to force behaviors, and at BlackRock, we are forcing behaviors.” It is true; BlackRock is, in fact, *forcing* behaviors on companies, as well as on the people who work in those companies and even consumers.

But the almost \$10 trillion it manages

for clients like you (via your retirement funds) and your local and state governments is only part of the picture. While State Street and Vanguard are major players in investment management, both of those corporate giants, among many others, now rely on BlackRock’s Artificial Intelligence platform known as Aladdin (Asset, Liability, Debt and Derivative Investment Network). The system now dominates the global economy, with lesser vampire squids everywhere taking their cues from the Dracula of cephalopods.

Cronies ‘R’ Us: Fink & BlackRock’s Political Influence

Aside from his company’s unimaginable economic power, the man who created and continues to lead BlackRock, self-proclaimed globalist Fink, is also one of the most powerful global corporatists in the public eye in his own right. Among other roles, he sits on the board of trustees of Klaus Schwab’s World Economic Forum (WEF), the organization bringing together leaders of government and busi-

ness to advance the “Great Reset.” In addition to being a top champion of ESG, the Switzerland-based WEF is also a “strategic partner” of the United Nations in radically transforming the world through the 17 “Sustainable Development Goals” known as UN Agenda 2030.

Fink also sits on the board of the globalist Council on Foreign Relations, which basically serves as Deep State headquarters in the United States. Then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admitted that the CFR tells globalists like her “what we should be doing and how we should think about the future.” Former Vice President Dick Cheney, a Republican, boasted of his long-time association with the group, though he admitted that he never told his constituents in Wyoming. Joe Biden once joked on stage that CFR President Richard Haass was his boss. And U.S. Navy Admiral Chester Ward, who spent 16 years as a CFR member before defecting, said the group and its members were dedicated to the destruction of American sovereignty and the creation of a one-world government.

Aside from the CFR, Fink is also a member of the even more exclusive elitist group known as the Trilateral Commission. The outfit was founded by the late billionaire David Rockefeller, who boasted in his autobiography *Memoirs* of “conspiring” with a “secret cabal” of “internationalists,” working “against the best interests” of America, to form a global political and economic order. The organization has been dedicated since its inception to advancing what it calls a “New International Economic Order” that is, in essence, warmed-over technocracy, a sort of fascistic and socialistic utopia in which technocrats and engineers run society and your life, supposedly in the name of efficiency and sustainability.

All of these organizations play a crucial role in the global transformation toward planet-wide, liberty-destroying technocratic governance. In other words, Fink sits at the apex of the Deep State. And he is using the unfathomable power of \$10 trillion under management to completely reshape every business and the global economy.

It is not just money and secretive organizations, though. In fact, Fink’s ties to government are so pervasive that it’s difficult to tell where the Biden adminis-



Big boss: BlackRock CEO Larry Fink, who recently distanced himself from the toxic term ESG, is a leading Deep State globalist helping lead the World Economic Forum and the Council on Foreign Relations.

AP Images

tration ends and BlackRock begins. This has been acknowledged even by establishment voices. Bloomberg, the propaganda megaphone of autocratic billionaire Michael Bloomberg, famously referred to BlackRock as the “fourth branch of government.” And that is no hyperbole.

Fink, a longtime Democrat, told Biden, “I’m here to help” in the 2020 election, according to establishment mouthpiece *The Atlantic*. And the relationship has only grown since then. BlackRock has also become a major power player in political contributions, handing out huge sums through its employees, its officers, and its own PAC, and setting a new record for spending in the 2022 midterm elections. Moreover, there is a seemingly never-ending list of individuals in the “revolving door” who move effortlessly from BlackRock to senior government posts and vice versa.

For instance, Brian Deese, then global head of sustainable investing at BlackRock, was chosen by Biden to lead his powerful National Economic Council. Before going to BlackRock, Deese served as senior advisor to Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Former BlackRock global chief investment strategist and former Obama official Michael Pyle, meanwhile, was selected as chief economic advisor to Kamala Harris. Another top Biden administration pick, Deputy Treasury Secretary Adewale Adeyemo of Nigeria, previously served as chief of staff for Fink.

The revolving door also sees many former government insiders serving in BlackRock. CFR member Thomas Donilon (CFR), chairman of BlackRock Investment Institute, previously served as national security advisor to Obama. His brother, Mike, is known as the “Biden whisperer” and was chief strategist to Biden’s campaign. Former SEC bigwig Dalia Osman Blass now serves as BlackRock chief of external affairs. When it seemed almost certain that Hillary Clinton would become president, Fink named former Clinton Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills to the BlackRock board.

In short, BlackRock operatives are running the very government that, in theory at least, would be in charge of protecting the public from a weaponized, hostile force like BlackRock being used to hijack the government and loot the public. The vampire fox is guarding the henhouse.



Partners in crime: BlackRock is working closely with the World Economic Forum (WEF Founder and Chairman Klaus Schwab pictured) to pursue the “Great Reset,” a radical transformation of humanity that threatens liberty and self-government worldwide.

Across Europe as well, Fink and BlackRock have been buying up politicians like baseball cards. The list is nearly endless. Analyst William Engdahl pointed out that among those helping BlackRock secure “lucrative contracts” with their former associates was former German Parliamentary bigwig Friederich Merz of then-Chancellor Angela Merkel’s “Christian” Democratic Party, who was widely reported to be Merkel’s possible successor. He was appointed chief of BlackRock Germany. Former British Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne, meanwhile, was hired as a “political consultant” for BlackRock.

Fink has also been scooping up leading central bankers, helping BlackRock win huge contracts with some of the most powerful institutions in the world. Former Swiss National Bank President Philipp Hildebrand, for instance, was hired as vice chairman of BlackRock. Former Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada Jean Boivin was appointed as “global head of research” at the BlackRock Investment Institute. And Stanley Fisher, who served as vice chairman of the Federal Reserve and head of the Bank of Israel, was appointed “senior advisor” to BlackRock. Former

Fed senior regulatory official Coryann Stefansson joined BlackRock’s Financial Markets Advisory unit in 2016. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

ESG Mania

To hear Fink and his fellow globalists tell it, sustainability and “sustainable development” are the overarching goals — the ideology underpinning the ongoing transformation of political and economic systems around the world. The UN’s Agenda 21 scheme for sustainable development in the 21st century, long exposed in these pages, is being broken up into more manageable units, too. The current one is known as the UN Agenda 2030 “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs).

This Agenda 2030, embraced by every national government on Earth including the Obama administration, includes 17 goals and 169 targets that impact every area of life, from healthcare and education to law and agriculture. Then-UN General Assembly chief Peter Thomson called it the “master plan for humanity,” while then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called it the global “declaration of interdependence” approved by the “Parliament of Humanity.”

If left unchecked, BlackRock and its fellow travelers will ultimately bankrupt all businesses and industries that do not meet the demands of the nightmarish “New World Order,” as the emerging global economic and political system has been described by its architects.

Governments have virtually all jumped on board, with the Chinese Communist Party boasting it played a “crucial role” in developing the global roadmap to technocratic totalitarianism. On the religious front, the Vatican and religious leaders around the world have joined forces to commit their followers to global development based on the SDGs.

On the business side, the World Economic Forum, where Fink serves on the board of trustees, is working with the UN through a “strategic partnership” to bring businesses worldwide into the global system. Fink is leading that charge by imposing ESG standards on companies. (For a much more in-depth treatment of ESG, read William F. Jasper’s cover story in our April 24 issue, “Biden’s ESG Agenda.”)

Touting “stakeholder capitalism,” a con-

cept popularized by Klaus Schwab and the World Economic Forum with roots in fascism and technocracy, Fink made clear that BlackRock would be allocating capital based not merely on profitability, but also on new politicized goals decided by the planet’s would-be overlords. “As stewards of our clients’ capital, we ask businesses to demonstrate how they’re going to deliver on their responsibility to shareholders, including through sound environmental, social, and governance practices and policies,” he explained in last year’s letter to CEOs.

While painting the transition as inevitable and writing as if he were merely a passive observer of these trends, Fink makes clear that companies refusing to get on the sustainable bandwagon will have investment and credit dry up. “Sustainable investments have now reached

\$4 trillion. Actions and ambitions towards decarbonization have also increased,” Fink wrote in his widely followed annual letter. “This is just the beginning — the tectonic shift towards sustainable investing is still accelerating.”

One of the big goals is “net zero,” which essentially means reducing net human emissions of gases such as carbon dioxide and methane to zero. Aside from the obvious fact that this is impossible short of exterminating the population of the planet (people exhale CO₂ and every human and animal activity releases some), the implications of this are extraordinary.

In his letter to CEOs last year, Fink made clear that resistance to the global predatory class’s agenda is futile. “Every company and every industry will be transformed by the transition to a net zero world,” he warned. “The question is, will you lead, or will you be led?”

These are not idle threats. In 2021, when Exxon’s leadership decided to pursue its own path on dealing with alleged man-made “climate change” rather than obey the dictates of corporate-funded environmentalists, BlackRock weaponized your money to force the energy behemoth to heel. In fact, by voting the shares it manages for its clients, BlackRock’s bosses added three new climate activists to the board of directors.

Perhaps even more alarming, BlackRock’s machinations forced Exxon to slash oil production, conveniently allowing the CCP-controlled PetroChina — one of BlackRock’s big investors — to grab the American energy giant’s oil fields. “Markets don’t like uncertainty, markets like totalitarian governments where you have an understanding of what’s out there,” claimed Fink. “Democracies are very messy, as we know in the United States.”

A major irony of the whole push for ESG and net zero is the 8,000-ton shrieking dragon in the room: Communist China. Fink and companies in which BlackRock holds a dominant stake have been funneling American capital into CCP-controlled entities in massive quantities, including into CCP military “companies” developing AI and other war-fighting technologies that will be decisive in any future conflict between the United States and China.

While Fink and his fellow travelers



Revolving door: Biden’s National Economic Council boss Brian Deese previously served as global head of “sustainable investing” for BlackRock.

AP Images

claim to be ever-so-concerned about “climate,” the “environment,” and “human rights,” they don’t blink when funneling U.S. investment into the hands of the most murderous and environmentally destructive group of gangsters to ever walk the planet. This obvious threat to U.S. national security is completely ignored by Fink’s buddies in the government.

Of course, BlackRock is not alone in this. Its largest competitors have also jumped on board the ESG net-zero bandwagon, joining forces with the UN and other asset managers in a quasi-conspiracy to manipulate the market and destroy all competitors who will not bow down. While questions have been raised by leading law-enforcement officials surrounding possible legal violations involving failure to fulfill fiduciary responsibilities and anti-competitive collusion, so far the conspirators are moving ahead rapidly with very little external interference or even public scrutiny.

If left unchecked, BlackRock and its fellow travelers will ultimately bankrupt all businesses and industries that do not meet the demands of the nightmarish “New World Order,” as the emerging global economic and political system has been described by its architects. Through its ability to manipulate markets and by starving companies and whole sectors of the economy of investment and credit, the prospect is very real. That was likely the goal all along.

Milking Taxpayers

Fink’s rise to prominence has been intimately intertwined with Big Finance and Big Government. According to the *Financial Times*, Fink was one of the key economic players behind the scenes in the Obama administration. During a battle over the debt ceiling in 2012, Obama Treasury Secretary Timothy “Turbo Tax” Geithner consulted Fink more than anyone else.

“Mr Geithner’s chats with Mr Fink were among at least 49 conversations the two men had over the past 18 months, making Mr Fink the Treasury secretary’s most frequent corporate interlocutor and an emblem of BlackRock’s growing influence in global financial affairs,” the *Times* reported in a 2012 piece that also mentioned BlackRock’s ties to various European governments.



Lofty goals: BlackRock is key in forcing businesses to align with the draconian UN “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs), also known as Agenda 2030 and dubbed the “masterplan for humanity” by UN leaders.

In addition to governments, Fink and BlackRock enjoy a very cozy relationship with the usurious banking cartel masquerading as a federal agency known as the Federal Reserve, as well as other leading central banks. In fact, BlackRock was a key partner of the Federal Reserve in the 2007-2008 economic crisis. “It helped the Fed value, manage and sell the collection of toxic securities known as Maiden Lane accumulated at the height of the financial crisis through the government’s rescue of AIG,” the *Times* continued in its 2012 article about BlackRock’s political influence.

Fink and BlackRock actually began under the roof of Blackstone in the late 1980s alongside a number of other co-founders. But within a short time, the firm was doing well and was spun off to become its own independent entity. Through a series of acquisitions and behind-the-scenes Deep State assistance, the company grew throughout the 1990s and 2000s into the multi-trillion-dollar beast it is today.

Especially lucrative was the 2007-2008 financial meltdown that Fink helped engineer, according to critics and analysts. The

reason so many pin the blame on Fink was his crucial role in creating the whole mortgage-backed security bonanza that, thanks to Federal Reserve policies, produced the subprime meltdown that ended up taking down multiple major banks. The crisis was an unbelievably prosperous time for BlackRock, as governments and central bankers called upon it to “help.” BlackRock even oversaw the Fed programs dealing with Bear Stearns and AIG assets during the crisis.

Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) became a major business for BlackRock, as investors handed over their money to the company to manage as part of various ETFs — and to misrepresent those investors by voting their shares in a way that advances the nebulous “ESG” goals determined by the global predator class Fink represents. BlackRock dominates the ETF industry today, controlling almost 40 percent of the market, more than the next two biggest competitors — Vanguard and State Street — combined. Its “iShares” ETFs, originally acquired from Barclays, now contains over \$2 trillion in assets.

BlackRock also played a key role in managing the 2020 pandemic “bailout” extravaganza. In fact, in March, the leviathan was enlisted through a variety of no-bid contracts by the Federal Reserve to manage a number of key programs. These included the extremely costly Fed bond-buying scheme and its commercial mortgage-backed security operation, as well as its credit ETF program. Among other schemes, BlackRock plowed huge amounts of Fed fiat currency into its own corporate bonds and stock ETFs.

In short, the Fed was creating currency and stealing your savings while letting BlackRock handle the distribution of that loot to megabanks and other cronies — all while enriching itself and its friends, and all with strings attached, naturally. Talk about a conflict of interest! This is just one of the tools that BlackRock and its allies in government and central banking have weaponized to force ever more aggressive visions of “wokeness” on American businesses and consumers.

One of the most significant transformations of the global economy engineered by BlackRock involved something called “Going Direct.” Masterfully explained by Corbett in his series, this proposal by BlackRock in August of 2019 called for

allowing central banks to inject newly created fiat money directly into the economy, not just through bond purchases and interest rate manipulation, by “Going Direct.” The scheme was adopted and implemented not long after being proposed.

In its 2019 paper, BlackRock’s former central bankers sketched out a new vision for a drastically expanded role for central banks in planning the economy and bypassing elected officials traditionally charged with overseeing fiscal policy (taxing and spending). “An unprecedented response is needed when monetary policy is exhausted and fiscal policy alone is not enough,” argued BlackRock. “That response will likely involve ‘going direct’: Going direct means the central bank finding ways to get central bank money directly in the hands of public and private sector spenders.”

Corbett explained the significance of this. “What we were told was a ‘pandemic’ was in fact, on the financial level, just an excuse for an absolutely unprecedented pumping of trillions of dollars from the Fed directly into the economy,” he explained in part two of his series on BlackRock, noting that the firm itself helped oversee and profited from this revolutionary transformation. “It’s sufficient to un-

derstand what the central bankers got out of the Going Direct Reset: the ability to take over fiscal policy and to begin engineering the economy of Main Street in a more ... well, direct way.”

Through its “Going Direct” revolution, in partnership with governments and central banks, BlackRock “had truly conquered the planet,” Corbett continued. “It was now dictating central bank interventions and then acting in every conceivable role and in direct violation of conflict-of-interest rules, acting as consultant and advisor, as manager, as buyer, as seller and as investor with both the Fed and the very banks, corporations, pension funds and other entities it was bailing out.”

Ultimately, BlackRock is on pace to become master of the universe, Corbett explained. “The transition of BlackRock from a mere investment firm into a financial, political and technological colossus that has the power to direct the course of human civilization is almost complete,” he concluded.

Aladdin

But wait — there’s more! BlackRock’s proprietary AI system known as Aladdin now oversees tens of trillions of dollars’ worth of investments beyond those managed by BlackRock itself. Nobody knows the true number, because BlackRock decided to stop making it public after the number ballooned to over \$21 trillion. Ironically, even the firm’s biggest competitors, Vanguard and State Street, rely on Aladdin, as do many of the Big Tech companies and countless institutional investors whose funds are being weaponized by BlackRock to impose the company’s technocratic vision on the economy.

On its website, BlackRock offers a rosy view of it all. “Everything we do is guided by the conviction that investors need this clarity at every point in the investment process in order to make more informed decisions, scale efficiently and achieve better investment outcomes,” the firm says. “In pursuit of this goal, we are relentlessly innovating and constantly evolving Aladdin technology. More than investment software, Aladdin technology brings clarity and connectivity to the world’s financial ecosystem.” It sounds so innocent — so helpful, even. And yet there is much more to the story.



Chinese connection: PetroChina, closely linked to the mass-murdering Chinese Communist Party, has been a major beneficiary of BlackRock’s scheming.

AP Images



Douglas Rissing/Stock/Getty Images Plus

Friends in high places: The banking cartel known as the U.S. Federal Reserve, one of the most powerful institutions on Earth, works very closely with BlackRock in what countless critics have blasted as a conflict of interest.

According to a 2020 piece in the *Financial Times*, half of the top 10 insurers by assets rely on BlackRock’s Aladdin system. The world’s largest pension fund, the Japanese government’s with some \$1.5 trillion, also does. The three largest publicly traded companies in the United States rely on the system to “steward” their hundreds of billions in corporate treasury investments as well. It is becoming increasingly difficult for any firm in the industry to remain competitive without the system, insiders say. In short, this AI-powered beast is rapidly coming to dominate the global investment landscape.

Governments, investors, and banks around the world rely on Aladdin for everything from deciding where to allocate bailout funds to deciding where to invest capital. In fact, by some estimates, almost three out of four trades on the U.S. stock exchange are made by Aladdin or some derivative of its systems. Countless fund managers have been sidelined within BlackRock and beyond as Aladdin advances. Real estate may be the next frontier, as Aladdin-fueled mega-

banks and managers buy up even single-family homes.

Because the system is proprietary, outsiders have no way of fully grasping or understanding all that goes on “under the hood.” The company portrays it as merely a “risk management” tool, which has been BlackRock’s specialty since the company’s genesis in the late 1980s. But in reality, there is much more going on than just calculating risk on the various investments such as stocks that are held by BlackRock’s clients and customers. The amount of data being gobbled up by the system is simply incomprehensible.

In a way, Aladdin is a microcosm of the future that Fink and his World Economic Forum comrades want for humanity. Decisions on everything — not just asset allocation and stock picks — will be removed from the hands of mere mortals. Instead, those decisions will be made by machines and the complex algorithms that power them. Like BlackRock’s decisions, AI will decide based on not what is best for a particular individual, but what is best for those at the top — those who determine what the algorithms do and how they make decisions.

Today, BlackRock uses its position in the market to force every company — even private ones, since they have to do business with public firms — to adopt “woke” policies to keep their ESG scores up. In the past, humans would have made decisions of where to allocate capital based on profitability and risk. Today, capital is allocated based on how well companies and managers comply with woke dictates such as peddling LGBTQ fanaticism and global-warming alarmism. In the not-too-distant future, similar processes will be put in place for AI-powered systems designed by technocrats to make even more decisions for you — at least if BlackRock and friends are not stopped.

Fighting Back

Even as BlackRock and the forces connected to it continue the long march through America’s corporate institutions, critics are marshalling their forces for war. There was a time when liberals and leftists would have been fighting against the unchecked power of a rogue corporation. (Occupy Wall Street, anyone?) To the extent that corporate-funded leftists are protesting BlackRock at all, it is to express displeasure with the firm for not doing *enough* to end capitalism and self-government.

But opposition among conservatives is growing, and Republican-led states are working aggressively to rein in BlackRock’s abuses. Just over the last year, GOP-led states have pulled almost \$5 billion from BlackRock. In late 2022, Florida announced that it was pulling billions of dollars from BlackRock over its “woke” ESG schemes. “Using Florida’s cash to fund BlackRock’s social-engineering project isn’t something we signed up for,” said Florida CFO Jimmy Patronis. “It’s got nothing to do with maximizing returns and is the opposite of what an asset manager is paid to do. We’re divesting from BlackRock.”

West Virginia State Treasurer Riley Moore actually started a coalition of close to 20 state treasurers dedicated to protecting their constituents from BlackRock. In a series of interviews with *The New American*, Moore warned that BlackRock and other financial predators were seeking to undermine the industries that his state — and the U.S. economy — depend on. Meanwhile, BlackRock seems to have no prob-



Calling them out: Investor and 2024 GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy has been exposing BlackRock's machinations while helping investors avoid having their money weaponized for ESG.

lem with those industries in China when they are controlled by ruthless mass-murderers. “Our own money is being weaponized against us,” Moore said before putting BlackRock on the blacklist of companies not allowed to do business with the state.

Numerous state attorneys general involved in a coalition who spoke with this writer said they were investigating BlackRock's schemes, too. Among other concerns, the top lawmen for their states suggested the company may not be fulfilling its fiduciary obligations. Instead of focusing merely on returns, BlackRock is focused on all sorts of other goals, many of them political. There may be numerous other legal violations such as anti-trust as well, the state AGs said, vowing to hold the firm accountable.

In an August letter to Fink, a coalition of state AGs warned in clear terms that his company's machinations may be illegal — not to mention immoral. “Our states will not idly stand for our pensioners' retirements to be sacrificed for BlackRock's climate agenda,” they said, pointing to several potential legal violations involving the firm's ESG investing and blasting its adherence to the UN's “Sustainable Development Goals.”

Awareness is gradually growing, too. Last year, then-Fox News host Tucker Carlson, by far the most popular cable news personality, exposed Fink and BlackRock to his millions of viewers. As the head of the largest asset manager in the world, Fink has “unparalleled control over the U.S. economy and of the companies that comprise it,” Carlson warned his viewers before introducing anti-ESG investment manager Vivek Ramaswamy. “That's a pretty significant fact given that Larry Fink has a political agenda that's at least as aggressive as his investment strategies.”

Ramaswamy, who runs his own fund and is now seeking the GOP nomination for president, slammed Fink and his schemes. “He is what I call the king of the woke industrial complex ... and what they do is they cause companies to bend the knee to woke orthodoxy,” the investor said, blasting Fink as “the puppet master behind the scenes of cor-

porate America” who weaponizes your money against you. “BlackRock says that we won't invest in your company unless you abide by these progressive standards, or we'll dock the pay of a CEO or fire a CEO who refuses to bend the knee to woke orthodoxy.”

The financial guru also brought up George Soros, suggesting Fink was worse and far more dangerous. “Say what you will about George Soros, at least it's his money,” Ramaswamy continued. “In this case, it is money that belongs to you, to everyday Americans in this country whose blood would boil if they actually knew the way their own money was being used to force a progressive social orthodoxy back onto them.”

Ramaswamy is one of many working to provide alternatives to investors who do not want their money being wasted or worse in pursuit of nebulous “ESG” scams designed to reshape the planet. The Timothy Plan offers multiple funds to help Christian investors put their money to work based on biblical principles, refusing to invest in anti-Christian companies supporting abortion and other evils. There is also an American Conservative Values Fund (ACVF) and even a MAGA fund.

BlackRock, which did not respond to a request for an interview, became the evil giant that it is through its symbiotic relationship with the U.S. government and central banks. As such, reining it in will simply require that Congress and state governments stop bleeding their constituents dry to feed this monster's unquenchable appetite for money, power, and control. Consumers and investors can help accelerate this by refusing to allow any of their money, including retirement accounts, to be placed under BlackRock's management. Now is the time, before BlackRock and friends destroy or devour everyone and everything standing in their way. ■



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THE GLOBAL TAXMAN COMETH

After decades in the making, the first true global tax, administered by the United Nations, is set to roll out by 2025, and climate change is the pretext.

by *Steve Bonta*

The two-day Summit for a New Global Financing Pact was held in Paris on June 22 and 23. The conference attracted a host of important globalists and heads of state, including Biden's climate envoy John Kerry, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholtz, Brazilian President Lula da Silva, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, World Bank head Ajay Banga, IMF President Kristalina Georgieva, and UN Secretary-General António Guterres. These and many other globalist movers and shakers headlined the latest in a series of international climate conferences whose purpose is indemnifying poor countries for alleged climate-related injustices.

According to its official website, the Paris summit had four objectives, namely:

- Restoring fiscal space to countries facing short-term difficulties, especially the most indebted countries
- Promoting private sector development in low-income countries
- Encouraging investment in "green" infrastructure for the energy transition in emerging and developing countries
- Mobilizing innovative financing for countries vulnerable to climate change.

All of these objectives flow from a landmark agreement, reached at the conclu-

Steve Bonta is executive senior editor of The New American.

Trashing the planet: Attendees at the recent New Global Financing Pact summit in Paris, where the first-ever global tax, to be administered by the UN system, was agreed to. Climate change is now regarded by globalists as the number-one pretext for erecting a world government, and every international climate conference under UN auspices is directed to that purpose.



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sion of last year's COP27 UN climate conference in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, to establish a permanent international fund for "loss and damage payments," monies to be exacted from wealthy countries and transferred to poor countries in the global south. This unprecedented international transfer of wealth is to be implemented in the name of "climate justice." In other words, because the climate change allegedly caused by developed countries is adversely affecting the environment and economy in poorer countries, developed countries need to pay for the damage.

The participants at COP27, including both President Biden and John Kerry, have been promoting the plan effusively. The

new global climate campaign premised on the supposed moral obligation of the rich countries to indemnify the poor has come to be known as the "Bridgetown Initiative" after the capital of Barbados, whose energetic prime minister, Mia Mottley, has been one of the most vocal and persistent proponents of "climate justice." Mottley was one of the stars at COP27, and the Bridgetown Initiative was one of the dominant themes at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, last January.

The only problem with the whole plan — aside from the fraudulent nature of so-called climate science per se — is how to convince the developed countries to cough



Shipshape: A container ship is loaded at Norfolk, Virginia. If a new global tax on international shipping goes into effect, look for prices on imported goods to rise significantly. The real danger of such a tax, though, is that it sets a precedent for other global taxes to follow.

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up whatever is deemed by globocrats to be their “fair share.”

This is where the seemingly innocuous term “innovative financing” mentioned under the fourth summit objective comes in. Ever since the creation of the entire United Nations system, a key globalist agenda item has been the creation of a global tax, levied and collected worldwide by an international authority. The long-term goal has always been to someday transform the United Nations system into a planetary government superior in authority to all national governments, including superpowers such as the United States. But that will not be possible until the United Nations acquires independent revenue streams financed by some type of global taxation levied by the UN itself.

For decades, economists such as C. Fred Bergsten, former advisor to Henry Kissinger and founding director of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, have been quietly working on ideas for global

taxes, including carbon-emissions taxes, global sales and income taxes, taxes on international emails, jet-fuel taxes on international flights, and so forth. So far, none of these schemes has come to fruition, at least in a global, UN-administered sense.

But it turns out that the most likely forms of “innovative financing” anticipated for the loss-and-damage fund are various proposals for a global tax. In a policy note prepared in anticipation of the June Paris summit entitled “Financing Loss and Damage: Overview of Tax/Levy Instruments Under Discussion,” authors Mattheiu Wemaère, Lola Vallejo, and Michel Colombier of the IDDRI, a European think tank promoting the radical climate agenda, lay out several options for an international tax. These include a fossil-fuel extraction levy, an air passenger/ticket levy, a tax on “windfall fossil fuel profits,” and an IMO (International Maritime Organization) carbon levy.

Of these proposals, the IMO carbon tax, i.e., a tax levied on all international

shipping under the auspices of the IMO, a UN agency that oversees international maritime activities, was received enthusiastically at the Paris conference. According to an AP report, “the idea of implementing a tax on the greenhouse gas emissions produced from international shipping has been gaining traction, with possible adoption at a July meeting of the International Maritime Organization. Some experts believe that a tax on shipping alone could raise \$100 billion a year, and a strong declaration on this in Paris might provide Macron with a symbolic win, especially if it gets backing from the IMO next month.”

It is hard to overstate the importance of this little-noted development. Giving the United Nations the authority, through the IMO, to levy a global tax for the very first time would be a devastating precedent. What might seem to the casual observer a minor bureaucratic matter with no personal relevance would be enormously consequential, and probably in the not-too-distant future. A global tax on shipping would of course trigger a rise in prices, including for all those goods from China that Americans have grown so accustomed to buying on the cheap. But far more importantly, it would establish both the framework and the precedent for additional global taxes. And it would for the first time confer on the United Nations system a hefty revenue stream completely independent of the voluntary contributions from member states. Once the IMO carbon tax is up and running, how long will it be before a similar tax is applied to airlines and ticketed passengers? And how long after that before some type of global sales tax is rationalized, all in the name of climate justice? At what point during this process might Americans wake up to the realization that the United Nations system, as a bona fide global taxing authority, has become the true world government that we at *The New American*, and other like-minded opponents of the UN, have been warning about for decades?

It is very clear that the globalists regard global environmentalism as the most promising pretext for global government. The enactment of a first-ever global tax in the name of “climate justice” would be an enormous step in that direction. ■

ENDING THE SILENCE

Released by Angel Studios, the independent film *Sound of Freedom* could be the catalyst for exposing the evil child sex industry and rescuing the children.

by *Annalisa Pesek*

In Calexico, California, in a dimly lit room, a thin, pale-faced man sips coffee and hunches over his computer keyboard. Thick bands of cigarette smoke waft above his head. On the screen flash photographs and videos of children as young as five and six years old. Some pose seductively for the camera, their shirts unbuttoned to expose their youthful skin, their innocent mouths smeared with cherry-red lipstick.

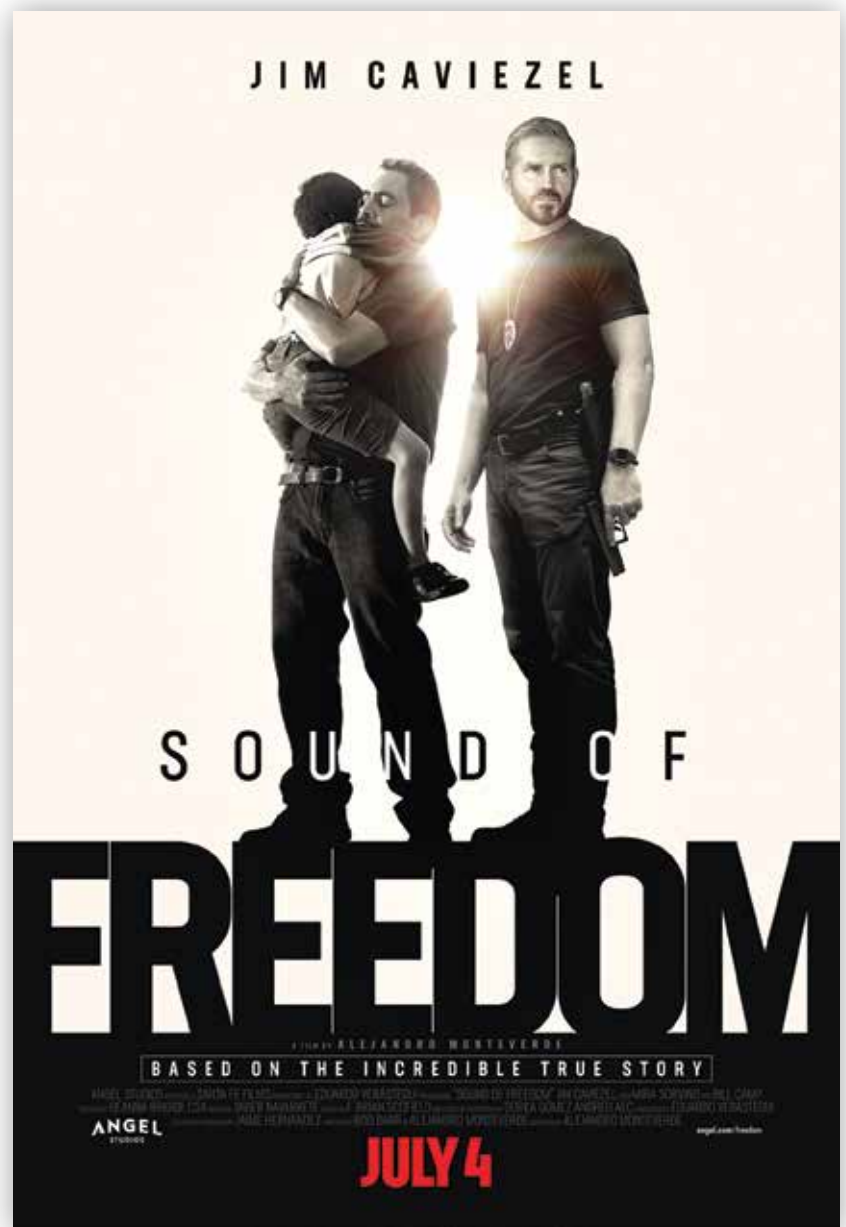
“Here it is gentlemen — my spring sampler,” types the pedophile, uploading dozens of pornographic photos that he sends to paying customers around the world.

The scene is so shocking and so painful that viewers will want to look away. And that is certainly the point of filmmakers Rod Barr (*Is That You?*) and Alejandro Monteverde’s (*Bella, Little Boy*) gripping new drama, *Sound of Freedom*. For too long, we have looked away in silence. Child sex trafficking is too ugly to face.

Yet just as sunlight streams through the chaos of the room during the raid of the pedophile’s home, *Sound of Freedom* casts a bright light on the shadows of this dark underworld, and on those trying to stop it.

Here are but a few facts the film uses to grab our attention. In a single year, more than 22 million new images of child pornography were posted to the web — an increase of 5,000 percent over the past five years. Moreover, the child slave trade has not only passed the illegal-arms trade, but will soon pass the drug trade. Consider that a bag of cocaine can be sold one time, but a child can be sold five to 10 times a day, the film informs.

Annalisa Pesek is a writer, editor, and librarian. She joins The New American after spending nearly a decade in New York publishing.



MOVIE REVIEW

To plot the efforts of real-life former U.S. Agent Tim Ballard (portrayed by Jim Caviezel), who for 12 years pursued pedophiles for the U.S. government, the filmmakers focus on but one of his many thousands of child rescues.

We learn that, despite the successes of his commissions by Homeland Security, Ballard's real mission is saving the children. When the agency refuses to allow him to focus on these rescues rather than simply busting pedophiles, he resigns, with the support of his wife, Katherine (Mira Sorvino), and launches his own private operation.

The film opens powerfully, depicting the deceptive and savage abduction of young Honduran siblings Rocío and Miguel Aguilar, ages 11 and seven. Convinced by a former beauty queen that they are auditioning for a local talent agency, their single father takes them to a nondescript hotel room, where they are photographed, kidnapped, and then shipped across Central America to perform sex acts for customers in various countries. A border-crossing meeting with the abductor of Miguel provides Ballard with the opportunity to rescue the young boy, and to find his sister as well.

Piteous archival footage of children being stolen in the streets plays as Rocío and Miguel and a dozen other children are carted away like cattle in a cargo box toward a foreign country, where they will be sold in both seedy and high-end sex dens.

Upbeat sounds of Latin music, combined with the haunting melodies of children singing, convey the beauty of the Hispanic culture contrasted with the hideousness of the crime that lies just beneath the surface.

That the traumatic scenes of the horrors these children face are difficult to watch is an understatement at best. They lead the audience to believe such abominations are common practice in the hellish realm of child sex trafficking.

The chilling experiences of the enslaved children immediately anchor us in an intensely emotional and gut-wrenching journey. Fortunately, during that journey moviegoers do not see the actual abuse itself, enabling the film to get a PG-13 rating. But we do know what is happening. Ultimately, we are left hopeful at the incredible resilience of these children to overcome the unspeakable traumas they endure, and by the efforts of Ballard to rescue them.

Caviezel's performance as Ballard does

not disappoint; his innate passion to fight evil is as convincing as in his other famous roles, as Jesus in *The Passion of the Christ* and as Edmond Dantès in *The Count of Monte Cristo*. The standout character Vampiro (Bill Camp), who is a hero in his own right, provides knowledge of the sex trade in the beach town of Cartagena, Colombia, that is essential to Ballard's quest to find Rocío.

A cigar-smoking, whiskey-drinking former cartel operator, Vampiro turns to "buying" countless numbers of children for the sole purpose of freeing them. He, too, is haunted and convicted in his willingness to enter this dangerous world of ghastly evil: "All of a sudden I'm hit by this tidal wave," he tells Ballard. "This tsunami of darkness. And I know — I'm the sadness in her eyes. Me. I'm the darkness. And I know — the darkness has to die."

At the end of the film, a postscript notes that America is a top destination for human trafficking and among the largest consumers of child sex. While Ballard's first successful operation in Colombia, as illustrated in the film, drew the attention of lawmakers in Washington, little has been done since by the U.S. government to combat this 21st-century form of slavery.

The truth is the child sex industry is booming in the United States, with films of exploited children selling for copious amounts of money. Not only are the children raped physically, but they are filmed, and those wretched movies are sold across the internet, netting traffickers billions of dollars in revenue.

To bring awareness to the cries of children entrapped in this global sex trade, *Sound of Freedom* is a must-see for every American. The film decries the silence of free-world leaders and elites unwilling to halt this exploding business and even to stop participating in it. Everyday people also refuse to hear it. It's too ugly for polite conversation. The film successfully sounds the alarm to mount an assault on child trafficking. If every person who sees this film develops even a fraction of Ballard's courage and determination to stand against this atrocity, a war would be waged, and this evil institution would be abolished.

Readers are encouraged to learn more about Ballard's nonprofit organizations, Operation Underground Railroad, which fights against child sex slavery, and The Nazarene Fund. ■



Faith FAMILY FREEDOM



RESCUING GOD'S CHILDREN

by Annalisa Pesek

This Independence Day, as Americans were fortunate enough to celebrate their God-given freedoms with family, friends, and fireworks, the debut of the new film *Sound of Freedom* gave them a unique insight into the innocent victims of child sex slavery, whose prospects of liberation appear bleak if not for the efforts of few good men.

Netting more than \$10 million in pre-sale tickets and a Rotten Tomatoes score of 92 percent, the gripping theatrical drama seems poised to galvanize a movement to end the silence on child sex trafficking. Yet this monumental film was almost not to be, taking nearly eight years to find its way to the big screen through the indie film company Angel Studios, which has launched such successful projects as *The Chosen* and *Dry Bar Comedy*.

The powerful backstory of the action-packed thriller is arguably as compelling as the film itself, depicting the true account of former U.S. government agent Tim Ballard, whose dogged determination to save the lives of the children entrapped in the \$154-billion child sex industry will hopefully begin a revolution against the horrific institution of modern-day slavery.

"[Tim Ballard] has that [King] David quality. There is something about that that just moved me," said renowned actor Jim Caviezel (*The Passion of the Christ*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*), who portrayed Ballard in the film, in a recent interview on *War Room*.

"This [film] hits your heart," continued Caviezel. "And it makes you want to do incredible things. And we as a country — our Republic — to save it, we have got to pull it together and save our children."

Go Big or Go Home

Ballard set out to do just that — to save our children. Resigning from his post at the Department of Homeland

Security (DHS) after 12 years of pursuing and apprehending pedophiles, Ballard refocused his efforts on rescuing the innocent victims entrapped in the child sex trade by starting his own private mission.

Currently the CEO of the nonprofits Operation Underground Railroad and The Nazarene Fund, Ballard has led more than 4,000 child rescues, all of which are filmed, according to Ballard, to ensure the heinous crimes inflicted on children do not remain hidden from the world.

Ballard's tenure with DHS began in 2002. Early on, he



Faith FAMILY FREEDOM



Angel Studios

was assigned to a child sex crimes unit dubbed the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, a group fighting against child pornography and dedicated to the capture of its creators and end consumers. The copious amounts of child pornography produced and disseminated in the United States is staggering. However, Ballard discovered that many of the children exploited in the sex films and images were foreign. With his eyes opened to the atrocities, he resolved to find what many officials consider to be collateral damage.

In an interview with alternative news outlet Redacted, Ballard recounted traveling overseas and experiencing the harrowing sale of children first-hand on the beaches of Colombia and the Caribbean. “I now believe the stats — that there are two million children [doing] criminal sex acts, and I believe it’s [a] low number,” he told Redacted. Ballard described his deeper quest into the underworld of the child sex trade and how the U.S. government’s policies kept him from accomplishing what he felt needed to be done to rescue the young victims.

“The disparities of the tools between the U.S. government and other governments, and to me there are no borders or

boundaries when it comes to this stuff, it’s transnational, the disparities in these countries, they [government leaders] knew nothing,” explained Ballard. “The kids are hopeless in certain countries, because no one knows they are there and they don’t know how to find them.”

The basis for *Sound of Freedom* stems from Ballard’s work in Colombia as a DHS consultant, and his subsequent resignation from the agency to start his own child rescue operation. “It wasn’t that the U.S. government wasn’t building the tools — they were and they still are,” said Ballard. “But it’s how do you get [the tools] everywhere?”

Told by DHS to return home and abandon the operation in Colombia, Ballard strengthened his resolve. “When they said come home and leave this country where they don’t have any tools, that’s when I said, I’m done coming home,” he said. “And if that means I gotta stay and I quit, I’ll quit, and we did. My wife and I, we made the decision to quit and we launched the rescue operation.”

That rescue, depicted in the film, ended up being the largest in recorded history, informed Ballard, at least in terms of how many children were rescued in such a small window of time.

This 21st-century form of slavery, explained Ballard, consists of slave labor, organ harvesting, and sex trafficking. He noted that some 30 million men, women, and children are currently enslaved worldwide. More people are held in bondage today than any other time in world history, even when slavery was legal.

Wake Up, America!

America is among the world’s top consumers of child sex. Thousands of accompanied and unaccompanied children cross the southern border each day. What happens to these children? Where do they go? Does anybody know? Ballard has probed deeply these haunting questions.

“Thousands of these kids are five years old or younger, showing up alone,” said Ballard. “I’ve been on the border. I see what happens. If you are a child ... there’s a policy that you have to release that child within 72 hours, which, it seems compassionate, but it’s the opposite. Enforcing [a secure] border is the only compassionate thing.”

In the film, after being abducted by a pedophile, seven-year-old Honduran Miguel Aguilar arrives at the U.S.-Mexico border, where he is discovered in the back of the perp’s vehicle and rescued by Ballard. Astonishingly, a child can be pimped for as much as \$5,000 per night, explained Ballard. Moreover, sex traffickers are not relegated to hung-over, rich, horny Americans. Ballard has arrested clergymen, law-enforcement officers, and educators, to name a mere few of the professionals involved.

Indeed, the child sex industry is booming in the United States, with films of exploited children being raped on camera selling for copious amounts of money.

“It’s everywhere!” Ballard exclaimed. Though it is hard to catch the powerful guys at the top — the Jeffrey Epsteins of the world who are “self-protected” and not held accountable — *Sound of Freedom* aims to shine a light on those who abuse the most vulnerable.

Notably, Ballard has collaborated with

Faith FAMILY FREEDOM

celebrated actors Mel Gibson and Jim Caviezel to uncover the child sex trade in countries such as Ukraine, Ecuador, the Netherlands, and Mexico, and has crisscrossed the globe to bring both high-profile corrupt leaders and low-level perpetrators to justice.

A new documentary set to be released sometime this year, titled *Hidden War*, will trace the intense rescue operations in these countries and expose the dangerous operators at the heart of the international child sex trade. Reflecting on the work of his teams as illustrated in the documentary, Ballard stated, “We rescued thousands of kids [prior to their imminent capture] who will never know they were rescued because they were never hurt.”

Readers can also anticipate the forthcoming documentary *Triple Take*, which is set to follow the release of *Sound of Freedom* and track the rescue in Cartagena, Colombia, which serves as the catalyst for *Freedom’s* dramatization.

Approached by Angel Studios eight years ago with a request to tell his story, Ballard had doubted the film would ever make it to the big screen. Yet in 2017, the script was written and the studio asked Ballard whom he would like to see por-

tray him in the movie. His swift response: “Jim Caviezel.” At first, the studio hesitated at casting Caviezel, arguing that Ballard’s looks do not quite match the *Count of Monte Cristo* star; however, it was meant to be, and as Ballard stated, “Caviezel killed it in the movie.”

“Hollywood is one of the reasons I even have to work,” said Ballard. “The smut they are putting out is in fact creating the demand.” Ballard would learn that Caviezel had a personal connection with the child sex trade, as Caviezel’s own three adopted children from China were rescued from the slave trade.

Appearing on Steve Bannon’s *War Room*, Caviezel recalled in the interview Matthew 13:45. “‘The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.’ This recalls exactly the bold actions of Tim Ballard, who gave up everything to save the children,” commented Caviezel.

The Key to Success Is Persistence

Big things have small beginnings. For the producers at Angel Studios, *Sound of Freedom* was a film destined to take the world by storm. The project had to

be done, yet its beginnings proved to be a bumpy ride. Originally, Fox owned the rights to *Sound of Freedom*; then Disney acquired it but decided not to distribute it, Angel Studios co-founder Jordan Harmon told Bannon on *War Room*.

An old saying states that the key to success is persistence — never giving up. And Harmon saw a massive need for a film depicting one of the worst atrocities ever committed by mankind. With support from the Angel Studios Guild — a group of company investors — Angel Studios committed every resource possible to produce *Sound of Freedom*, which was fittingly released on Independence Day.

“It’s not so much the storytellers determining the success of films, but the investors, the gatekeepers greenlighting the film’s production,” explained Harmon. The guild’s mission aims to produce films that amplify light. For Harmon, “light” is defined as anything that is noble, just, and beautiful. Director and writer Alejandro Monteverde (*Bella, Little Boy*) strove to make every frame of *Sound of Freedom* contain a stream of light, despite the disturbing content. “It is meant to be hopeful,” remarked Harmon. “Child sex trafficking is the scourge that has to be stopped.”

To reach the widest possible audience, consensus among the producers was to release the film on July 4, as the summer months are the biggest of the year for blockbuster films. For example, summer 2023 has seen the release of mega films *Mission Impossible 7: Dead Reckoning, Part One* and *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*. Angel Studios has seen previous success during huge blockbuster months, including the release of *His Only Son*, a retelling of the biblical account of Abraham and Isaac, over Easter, another weekend considered profitable at the box office.

Eight Long Years to Release

“Eight years ago it [child sex trafficking] was unheard of,” said writer Rod Barr in an interview at the *Sound of Freedom*



Angel Studios

Faith FAMILY FREEDOM

red-carpet premiere. “Right now, there’s a little more awareness of the issue, so I think it’s perfect timing for the movie because people can sort of absorb it.... When I first learned of it, it didn’t seem real. It didn’t seem possible.”

Though a deal for *Sound of Freedom* was reached within five short days between actor Jim Caviezel, former U.S. agent Tim Ballard, and Angel Studio executives, the journey leading up to this point was fraught with obstacles.

Rewind to early 2013, when Angel Studios was founded by the Harmon siblings — six boys and three girls — who conceived of an app that would allow people to view content that was family-friendly and to mute or skip unwanted content, such as profanity or sexual content that was not reflective of what families wanted their children to see.

Finding their productions were strug-

gling because of this new technology, Disney, Warner Bros, and Lucasfilm all sued the Harmons in 2016, derailing the family’s mission. Yet audiences who already were tapped into the Harmons’ program rose up and supported the Harmons. Within five days, their company VidAngel, now Angel Studios, raised more than \$10 million to start the successful franchises *Dry Bar Comedy* and *The Chosen*, the cultural phenomenon and acclaimed series based on the life of Jesus Christ. Equity crowdfunding started the success of *The Chosen* and solidified the studio’s mission to tell stories that are family-friendly and faith based.

In the midst of the ongoing lawsuits filed by the big-box studios, Angel Studios filed for bankruptcy. Within a year, a trustee running the company investigated all the parties involved in the lawsuits and decided that, specifically, Disney was

the bad actor and that the lawsuit needed to be dropped.

“This was about crushing the competition,” remarked Harmon. And the lawyers knew it. Ever innovating, the company’s next move was to launch a program where viewers would pay it forward, essentially sending the company’s content for free to those who might not otherwise see it. Viewers of *Sound of Freedom* will encounter the pay-it-forward program detailed at the end of the film in an inspiring message from Jim Caviezel.

The pay-it-forward program ultimately produced the \$1.2 million needed to keep the company afloat. The judge in the case ruled that the company would pay back the money owed Disney but not be liquidated. Angel Studios raked in a staggering \$47 million the following year. The success of the projects of *Dry Bar Comedy* and *The Chosen* kept the company in the black, and the future triumph of crowdfunding for the company was reflected in the raising of more than \$5 million in less than 14 days for *Sound of Freedom*.

Meaningful storytelling is depicted in their productions in incredible ways, proven in the overwhelming success of *The Chosen* and *Sound of Freedom*. “This film is more than a movie; it is a movement,” said Harmon. “If a story moves you, you will want to make a difference. Your voice and your values can be heard.”

People often ask, “What can I do?” Americans can find no better way to get involved in the fight against the horrendous institution of selling and abusing children than buying tickets and going to see the film today and talking to friends and family about this practice. “*Sound of Freedom* took DC by storm. Hope you’re inspired. Send a message to Hollywood. Buy a ticket! In 20-30 years, child sex trafficking cannot be part of our culture. It has to die,” declared Harmon. God’s children are not for sale! ■



facebook.com/JPCaviezel

Bringing it to the Silver Screen: Tim Ballard poses for a photo with Jim Caviezel (left) and actress Mira Sorvino (who played Ballard’s wife, Katherine).



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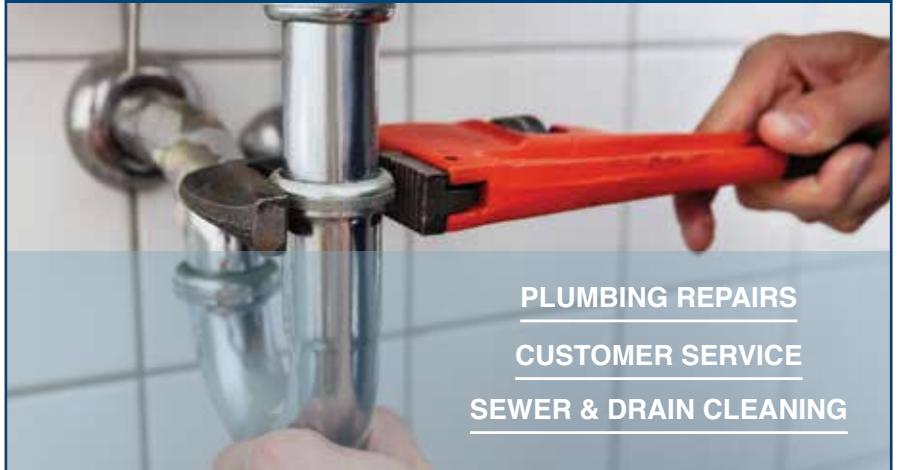
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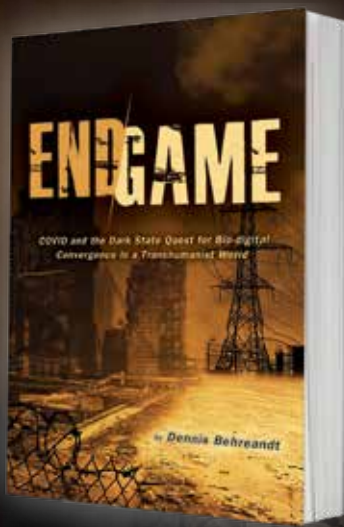
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by Dennis Behreandt



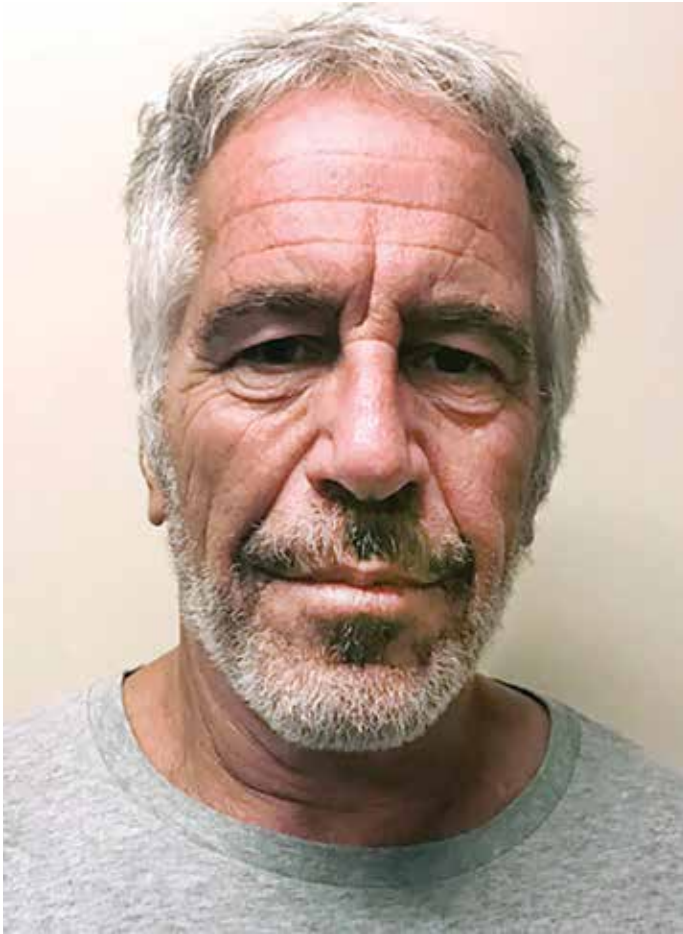
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FASTEST GROWING CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE

The global nightmare of child sex trafficking has become a giant industry because rich and powerful people protect, promote, aid, and abet it.



AP Images

The tip of the iceberg: While Jeffrey Epstein's sex-trafficking escapades are now well-known, the truth is that what Epstein did is only part of a much-larger trend among global elites in business and government.

by William F. Jasper

Child sex trafficking is said to be the world's fastest growing criminal enterprise, with an estimated two million child victims being abducted and sold into sexual bondage annually. The true numbers may be even higher; the dark world in which child traffickers operate does not lend itself to easy quantification. And despite occasional acknowledgment of this massive crisis by the United Nations, the U.S. State Department, and the FBI, relatively little has been done to bring the traf-

ficking kingpins to justice or to break up the trafficking networks.

According to a 2012 UNICEF report, around 30 million children were trafficked globally between 1982 and 2012. The child sex trade has exploded in the decade since that report came out.

With wars, revolutions, economic dislocation, social collapse, and mass migration affecting much of the globe, the number of vulnerable children has vastly increased. At the same time, the perverse market for sex with children has been stoked by the booming internet-fed child porn industry, school programs aimed at sexually grooming children, and an organized pedophile lobby that has rebranded its deviant predators as being merely "minor-attracted persons."

How is it possible that we could allow millions of children to be swept into this horrific vortex and subjected to unspeakable crimes? A big part of the answer can be found in the responses (and non-responses) we have seen to *Sound of Freedom*, the new film starring Jim Caviezel, which is the first major effort to shine a light on the shadowy world of child sex slavery. (See review on page 21 and related article on page 23.)

Much of the "mainstream" media simply ignored the film. No reviews. Not even a mention. Others savaged it. Typical of the mauling by the critics was the Daily Beast offering titled "How Hollywood's 'Jesus' Jim Caviezel Went Full QAnon," which was picked up and run by Yahoo! News and other outlets prior to the movie's release. The Daily Beast/Yahoo piece also featured a CNN attack titled, "False Prophet: 'Passion of Christ' Star Pushes False QAnon Conspiracy."

The fact that *Sound of Freedom* even made it to theaters is something of a miracle. It should have been out in 2018, when it was finished and ready to go. What happened? Well, according to Caviezel, Disney bought up distribution of the film from Fox and refused to release it. Disney, of course, has "evolved" over the past few decades from legendary producer of wholesome, family-friendly entertainment to toxic purveyor of "woke" LGBTQ degeneracy. Neither Disney nor any other Hollywood studio was interested producing a movie that would expose the lurid underworld of the child flesh peddlers. And when upstart Angel Studios came forth with an heroic independent effort to do so, the Tinsel Town heavyweights were too busy celebrating Pride Month (with parades of naked men exposing their private parts to children on public streets) to even offer a thumbs up in support of *Sound of Freedom*.

Child sex trafficking exists on the horrendous scale that we see today because corrupt elites are complicit in it — in various ways

William F. Jasper is a senior editor of The New American.



Dirty secret: For decades, BBC personality Jimmy Savile molested children with impunity. His crimes were covered up by influential Brits who could have stopped it.

AP Images

and at various levels. Long before the Jeffrey Epstein/Prince Andrew scandals, high-profile cases of large-scale child sex rings involving prominent politicians, celebrities, and business moguls had erupted in England, Belgium, and the Netherlands. In every case, a sickening pattern emerged of powerful political figures and intelligence agencies colluding with major media platforms to smother investigations and silence growing public outrage.

During the 1980s and 1990s, England was rocked by a series of pedophile scandals involving members of Parliament, a prime minister, diplomats, and the MI5 and MI6 intelligence agencies. Liberal Party Member of Parliament Cyril Smith, Conservative Party Prime Minister Edward Heath, Home Secretary Leon Brittain, MI6 Deputy Director Peter Hayman, and dozens of other prominent Brits were reliably accused by multiple victims of being active pederasts and having victimized hundreds of children, including very young boys and girls. Many of the accused were also associated with the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE), which provided pedophiles with secure email, as well as meetup opportunities.

PIE also campaigned to abolish age-of-consent laws (essentially legalizing child pornography and pederasty) and advocated for legalizing incest. The lengths to which the British government, its intelligence services, and the U.K. media went to squash investigations into these charges is shocking.

During the same time period, the same British elites covered up another massive child sex-abuse scandal involving the decades-long crime spree of pederast performer Jimmy Savile, the flamboyant BBC radio and TV personality who was presented to the public as a “prodigious philanthropist” for his fundraising campaigns for children’s hospitals and charities. He was even knighted “Sir James Wilson Vincent Savile.” Turns out he was using his fame to gain access to and rape hundreds of children, some as young as five. The folks he worked with at BBC knew. The folks he worked with at the National Health Service knew. Lots of people knew. Yet, famous “philanthropist” Jimmy Savile was allowed to continue molesting kids for decades. Only after his death in 2011 did the people in the know express shock and allow investigations to go forward. Only

then were the victims, who had previously been ignored (or vilified), finally listened to. But those who had protected and abetted Savile were not brought to justice.

Belgium’s X-Files

The sensational abduction/rape/torture/murder trial of serial sex offender Marc Dutroux in 2004 offered a chance to expose the involvement of the power elite of Belgium and the European Union in the child flesh peddling trade. He was convicted in 1989 of kidnapping, raping, and torturing five girls age 12 to 19, and sentenced to 13 years in prison. However, he was paroled in 1992, three years into his sentence. How many children he kidnapped, tortured, and killed before his re-arrest in 1996 is not known, but it is undoubtedly more than he is officially credited with. In 1995 he kidnapped eight-year-old classmates Julie Lejeune and Mélissa Russo, whom he imprisoned, tortured, videotaped, and eventually starved to death. He kidnapped at least four additional girls, two of whom were killed.

Dutroux’s arrest brought hundreds of thousands of Belgians into the streets in protest of the blatant injustice that had allowed the monster the freedom to victimize more children. Public outrage grew in 2004, when Dutroux’s trial began and it became apparent that a coverup was in the making. Evidence pointed to Dutroux and his several accomplices being low-level players in a much bigger pedophile ring that involved high-level politicians. *The X-Files — What Belgium Was Not Supposed to Know About the Dutroux Affair*, a thoroughly researched book by a team of veteran crime reporters, made it plain that an extraordinary effort to discredit witnesses, misdirect the trial, and dismiss crucial evidence was underway. The judge, the prosecutor, and the investigators who were originally assigned to the case and who were pursuing that evidence were removed and replaced by people who were willing to close the books with Dutroux solely taking the rap. Higher-ups could breathe easily again.

Epstein’s Elite Circles

Where these and other scandals of previous decades have failed to flip the lid off the global child trafficking trade, the case of Jeffrey Epstein could possibly succeed. Epstein, the super-wealthy convict-

ed child molester, died in prison in 2019 while awaiting trial on new charges of sex trafficking minors. His death, which was conveniently (and unconvincingly) ruled a suicide, has failed to close down inquiries into the network of his rich and famous associates and their possible connections to the global child flesh trade.

In June of this year, JPMorgan Chase, the world's biggest bank, agreed to pay \$290 million to Epstein's victims. The bank had knowingly facilitated Epstein's decades-long crime spree, keeping him as a client for years after he had been convicted as a sex offender and after its own employees had filed numerous suspicious activity reports regarding his cash withdrawals and investments. The bank said that Epstein committed "heinous crimes" and "any association with him was a mistake and we regret it."

Deutsche Bank agreed to a \$75 million payout to Epstein's victims and paid a \$150 million fine to New York regulators for failing to police its financial dealings

with Epstein. A related lawsuit by the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands is still pending. An interesting wrinkle in that case is the trouble that prosecutors have been having in trying to serve a subpoena on Google billionaire Larry Page. (He is believed to be hiding out on one of several private islands that he owns.)

The execs at JPMorgan and Deutsche are not alone in abetting Epstein's "heinous crimes." Epstein could boast a Rolodex of contacts among the high and mighty to rival anyone. Billionaire CEOs, famous scientists, British royalty, Hollywood stars, movie moguls, tech titans, politicians — he courted them all, and they courted him: Bill Gates, Woody Allen, Bill Clinton, Ariane de Rothschild, Peter Thiel, Les Wexner, Leon Black, Harvey Weinstein, Ehud Barak, Noam Chomsky, to name a few. Many of them are movers and shakers in elite globalist circles such as the World Economic Forum (WEF) and Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Epstein was a member of the CFR and the Trilateral Com-

mission, as well as a regular at the WEF Davos glitterati fests. Of particular interest should be the recent revelation that Biden's CIA Director William Burns (a CFR member) had multiple meetings with Epstein. As we have previously reported, there is solid evidence to indicate that Epstein's sex trade was an intelligence blackmail operation. Of course, not everyone who appeared in his infamous little black book, his appointments calendar, or the flight logs of his Lolita Express was or is guilty of directly participating in his villainy. But it is difficult to absolve them of all culpability. At the very least, they conferred respectability on his predatory practices. And, as more evidence comes out, we are likely to find that many of those now denying involvement in his global pedophile ring were indeed knowing participants.

Facebook/Instagram Pedo Pushers

On June 7, 2023, *The Wall Street Journal* published a stunning article entitled "Instagram Connects Vast Pedophile Network" that seriously indicts the social-media outlet.

"Pedophiles have long used the internet, but unlike the forums and file-transfer services that cater to people who have interest in illicit content, Instagram doesn't merely host these activities. Its algorithms promote them," the *Journal* reported. "Instagram connects pedophiles and guides them to content sellers via recommendation systems that excel at linking those who share niche interests."

According to the *Journal* report, Instagram (which is owned by Mark Zuckerberg's Meta/Facebook conglomerate) enabled people to search "explicit hashtags" and then connected them to accounts that used the terms to advertise child sex material for sale. Instagram algorithms also immediately provided researchers with "suggested for you" recommendations of purported child-sex-content sellers and buyers."

The fetid Epstein cesspool has awakened millions to the fact that many of "the great and good" are actually the foulest of criminals preying on the most vulnerable and innocent. And *Sound of Freedom* is providing an educational vehicle and a crusading impulse that may finally gain the political impetus to bring the traffickers to justice and free the children. ■



Classic coverage: Belgian Marc Dutroux, a serial rapist and murderer, was just a low-level player in a large pedophile ring involving high-level officials in the Belgian government. Naturally, the elites tried to hide their involvement.



THE GOODNESS OF AMERICA

Friend-finding Mission

Donna Herter of Rochester, Minnesota, was concerned that her 24-year-old son with Down syndrome did not have friends, so she took to social media for help and was blown away by the support she received in response.

Though Herter's son, Christian Bowers, has Down syndrome, he likes to engage in regular fun activities such as bowling and video games, but he struggled to make friends once he finished school.

"[He was] just constantly asking where his friends are, why doesn't anybody want to come over and spend some time with him," Herter told CBS News. "We would go to Walmart or the store and he would invite half the store to come home with us and play video games with us. And of course, nobody would. And he just doesn't understand why."

It saddened Herter to watch her son struggle with loneliness, so she decided to put up a post on her Facebook page to see if any local guys would like to come and spend time with her son for two hours. She even offered to pay \$80 to anyone who was willing to visit her son.

She was shocked to find that her request received 5,000 comments within hours of being posted. Not only did people volunteer their time to help, but many parents offered suggestions as well.

After discussions with several of the people who reached out, Herter narrowed down her choices to seven men, who now visit Christian once per week on a rotating schedule.

According to Herter, Christian meets people at special-needs events, but also "craves a friendship with somebody who is neurotypical. He doesn't want to only hang out with somebody with special needs."

One of Christian's new friends, James Hasting, told CBS News he was heartbroken that Herter felt compelled to pay people to spend time with Christian. Hasting works with people with disabilities and said the time he has spent with Christian has encouraged him "to look at the world for more than what we see on the surface."

"Just because someone is different than what you are used to, it doesn't mean that they aren't the same at heart," he elaborated.

Beyond new friendships, the post has already created new opportunities for Christian. According to CBS News, he was invited to spend time with local firefighters, went bowling with local Marines, and was named honorary mayor of the nearby town of Wentzville for the day.

Herter said Christian's new friendships have made an enormous difference.

"He every night goes to bed with a smile on his face. He tells everybody about his new friends. He gets so excited talking about life now and what he's doing," Herter said.

Blessed With Hot Water and Heat

When Stephanie Peach of Monroe, Wisconsin, learned that her favorite Pick 'n Save grocery store worker had gone without a boiler system for more than a year, she stepped in to help.

Peach was enjoying one of her typical encounters with Pick 'n Save employee Dennis Raiten when Raiten mentioned that his boiler system went out 15 months ago and he had had no heat or hot water in all that time.

Peach decided to launch a fundraising campaign for Raiten on May 26 to help raise money for a new boiler, and within just three weeks, Raiten had the funds he needed to purchase a new one.

The page raised more than \$6,500, surpassing the \$5,000 goal, which Peach had increased to also cover the costs of some additional bathroom renovations Raiten needed. One of the donors gave \$100 to the page and commented, "Dennis is always friendly and we were sad to hear he had no heat last winter. He is a hard worker ... and deserves to have comfortable living at home."

Peach also gifted Raiten an air-conditioning unit so that he could stay cool this summer.

Raiten told NBC 15 he was "flabbergasted" by Peach's kindness and generosity.

Peach is hopeful her story will inspire others to be kind to others who may be quietly struggling.

Firefighters Swing Into Action

The Verdigris Fire Department in Verdigris, Oklahoma, went far beyond the call of duty when they helped a local family install a tree swing for their little ones.

Meaghan Perceful's young daughters, Magnolia and Maren, had been asking their parents to put up a tree swing in their yard for months, but the family did not have a ladder tall enough to reach any of the tree branches.

Perceful posted on the local Verdigris Community Page asking if someone could lend them a large ladder or a bucket truck to help get the swing over the one branch that they could possibly reach.

One user suggested she reach out to the local fire department. She was surprised when the department seemed happy to help free of charge.

"Just a local fire department and four wonderful fire fighters, making two little girls' day!" she posted on Facebook on June 1, alongside several pictures highlighting the fire department's swing-hanging efforts.

Perceful said the firefighters also brought hats for the two little girls and allowed them a special visit inside the fire-truck, News 9 reported.

Female firefighter Ariel Shepherd was among those who helped install the tree swing. She said she hopes to have inspired the two little girls.

"It's the type of job where people will say, 'I didn't realize girls can be firefighters.' That's cool to hear girls and women and be recognized," said Shepherd.

Chief Mike Shaffer said the opportunity to bring the Perceful family joy was as important to his firefighters as it was to the family.

"It's a whole different experience for firefighters to create memories that aren't attached to traumatic incidents," said Shaffer. ■

— Raven Clabough

A PERMANENT ENGINE OF CORRUPTION: THE BIRTH OF CENTRAL BANKING IN AMERICA

The Federal Reserve System is not America's first central bank. Central banking may be anathema to sound money, but it's an almost-permanent blight on America.

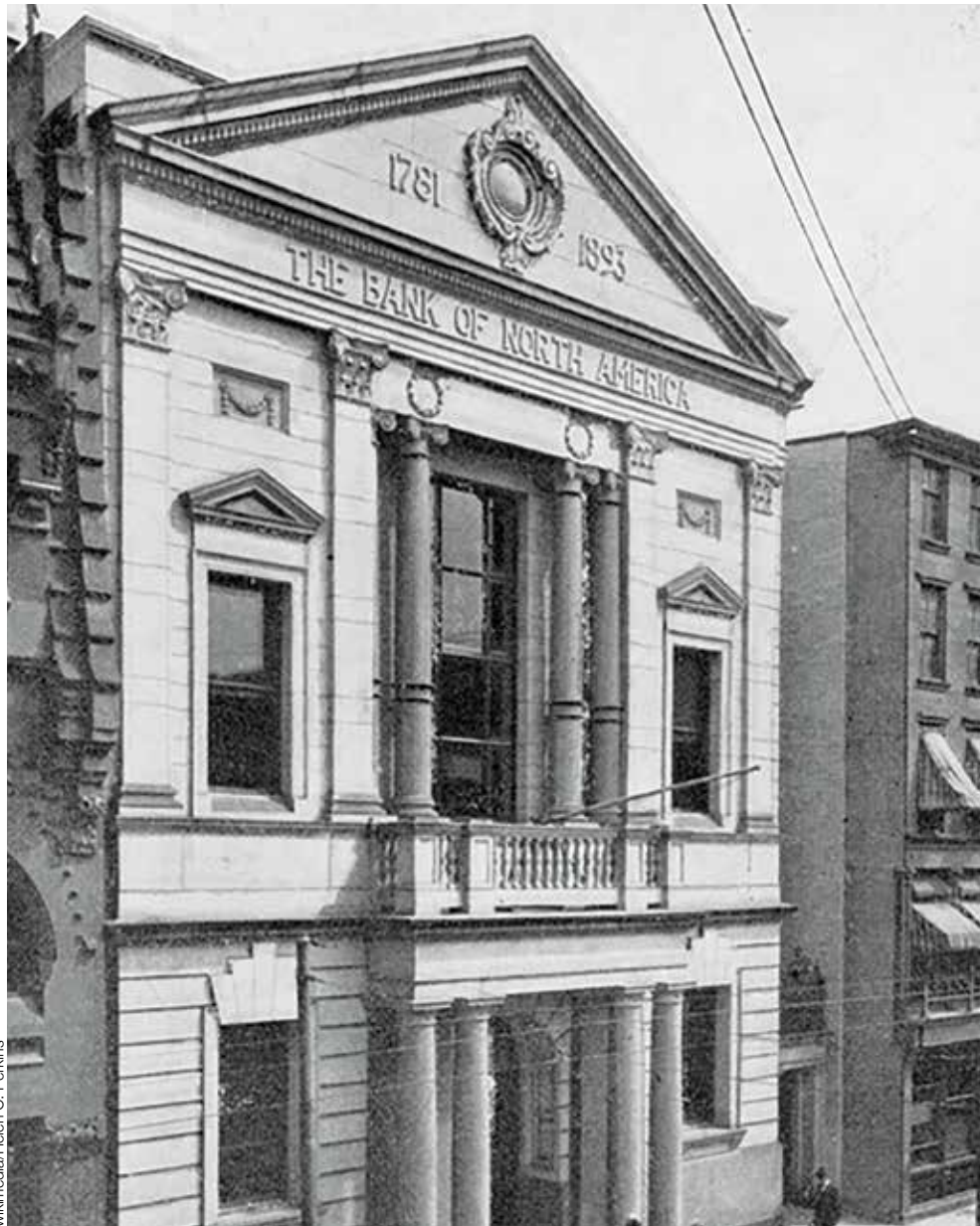
by Thomas DiLorenzo

The American Revolution was a war of secession from the British empire and its corrupt economic system of "mercantilism." A set of policies that benefited politically connected businesses at the expense of their customers, British mercantilism involved protectionist trade policy that eliminated foreign competition and raised prices, government grants of monopoly to politically connected businesses, bailouts and subsidies to the same, heavy taxes and public debt, and the treatment of its subjects in the Colonies as tax slaves and cannon fodder for its imperialistic ventures. All of this was financed by the British central bank, the Bank of England.

As soon as the Revolution was over, the "nationalists" in American politics, known as the Federalists, sought to impose this very system on Americans. They were led by Philadelphia businessman Robert Morris, a native of Liverpool, England, who became very wealthy as what we would today call a defense contractor during the Revolution, with the help of his political frontman, young Alexander Hamilton. Morris was the first "superintendent of finance," which would later be called the secretary of the treasury. Some believe he was the wealthiest man in America at the time.

The apparent thinking of the Morris/Hamilton Federalists was that it was a bad thing to be on the *paying* end of a

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Wikimedia/Helen C. Perkins

First national monopoly: The Bank of North America, founded at the behest of Alexander Hamilton and Robert Morris in 1781, was not only America's first central bank, but also the only bank permitted to operate in the country. After only two years of inflation, it went bankrupt, leaving a ruined economy in its wake.

mercantilist empire, even worth fighting a bloody revolution to escape. But it was a *good* thing to be on the *money-making*, tax-collecting, and wealth-creating end of an empire.

As explained by Murray Rothbard in *The Mystery of Banking*, Morris, Hamilton, and the other nationalists, mostly from New York, Philadelphia, and New England, wanted

to reimpose in the new United States a system of mercantilism and big government similar to that in Great Britain, against which the colonists had rebelled. The object was to have a strong central government, particularly a strong president or king as chief executive, built up by high taxes and heavy public debt. The strong government was to impose high tariffs to subsidize domestic manufacturers, develop a big navy to open up and subsidize foreign markets for American exports, and launch a massive system of internal public works. In short, the United States was to have a British system without Great Britain.

An important part of what Rothbard called “The Morris scheme” was “to organize and head a central bank, to provide cheap credit and expanded money for himself and his allies” and to “subsidize their businesses in other ways.... The Bank of North America [America’s first central bank] was deliberately modeled after the Bank of England.”

Alexander Hamilton, whom Rothbard called Morris’ “youthful disciple,” assisted Morris in creating this central bank while he was still an aide to George Washington near the end of the Revolution. He had no real knowledge of or experience in economics and finance, so he asked Colonel Timothy Pickering, who would become President Washington’s secretary of state and secretary of war, for assistance. As Ron Chernow wrote in his biography of Hamilton (*Alexander Hamilton*), when George Washington found out that Hamil-



Financier of the American Revolution: Wealthy Liverpool native Robert Morris wanted to impose on Americans the same central banking system used by Great Britain.

ton was interested in the job of superintendent of finance, he “confessed that he had never discussed finance with his aide” and was unaware that he knew anything about the subject.

“Hamilton brushed up on money matters,” writes Chernow, with some primers Pickering sent him such as “tracts written by the English ... polemicist Richard Price, and his all-purpose crib, Postlethwayt’s *Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*.” So Hamilton read a dictionary along with *British mercantilist propaganda pamphlets* to teach himself enough financial lingo to write an April 30, 1781 letter to Morris that advocated protectionist tariffs, a central bank, taxes on land, poll taxes, and a large public debt. These are all things that he knew Morris had long been in favor of. “A national debt, if not excessive, will be to us a national blessing,” Hamilton famously said. This was of course the British mercantilist system in drag, audaciously relabeled “The *American System*” by Hamilton in a breathtaking act of Orwellian doubletalk.

American court historians have long

touted the economically uneducated Hamilton as some kind of financial genius while portraying Jefferson as an economically clueless, backwoods farmer who supposedly did not want any banks to exist. Exactly the opposite is true.

Upon returning home after serving as the American ambassador to France, Jefferson placed a plaster bust of French Finance Minister Anne Robert Jacques Turgot at the entrance to his home, Monticello. A replica is still there to this day. Turgot was a brilliant economics scholar, a friend of Adam Smith, and literally one of the founders of the discipline of economics. His writings on the economics of capital investment and savings informed Adam Smith’s famous book *The Wealth of Nations*. It was Turgot who coined the phrase “laissez-faire” to describe the system of peaceful, voluntary trade under a regime of economic freedom. He was also a powerful and well-known critic

of French and British mercantilism. Jefferson was very familiar with his writings and the writings of the other European founders of the discipline of economics, such as Adam Smith.

It was Jefferson who was well-schooled in the economics of his day, not Hamilton, contrary to what the court historians have said. In his 1890 biography of Hamilton (also titled *Alexander Hamilton*), the great late-19th/early-20th-century Yale University sociologist William Graham Sumner described Hamilton’s economic writings as “completely befogged in the mists of mercantilism.” He said that Hamilton’s economic theories “show a remarkable amount of confusion in regard to money, capital, and debt,” and that his reputation in the field of finance “has been greatly exaggerated.”

Morris and Hamilton got their bank, the Bank of North America, in 1781. It was granted a monopoly privilege of its notes being receivable in all tax payments to state governments and the federal government. No other banks were permitted to operate in the country! It lent most of its

newly created money to the federal government, with taxpayers forced to pay the bank principal and interest. Despite these privileges, the bank inflated its currency so much that it became severely depreciated and no one trusted it. The bank lasted only two years, went bankrupt, and was privatized in 1783. So went America's first central bank.

Rather than abandoning the Quixotic, mercantilist scheme of a central bank run by politicians for the benefit of banks and other politically connected businesses, Morris, Hamilton, and the Federalists doubled down and went on a crusade to create an even bigger and more grandiose central bank, also modeled after the Bank of England. Thanks to the Bank of England, Hamilton declared in his letter to Morris, "Great Britain is indebted for the immense efforts she has been able to make in so many illustrious and successful wars," and has showered that nation with "imperial glory." One assumes that Hamilton did not include the British war against the American Colonists in his list of "illustrious" and "successful" wars financed by the Bank of England.

An "Engine of Influence"

When Hamilton called the public debt "a national blessing" in his letter to Morris, he was alluding to one of his own Machiavellian schemes. As he explained, the wealthier people of the country would be the ones who owned government bonds. These influential people would then become part of a powerful political constituency in favor of bigger government and higher taxes to make sure there was always enough money in the treasury to pay the principal and interest on their government bonds. They would be helpful in bringing the rest of British mercantilism to America, in other words. As Sumner wrote in his biography, Hamilton favored a large national debt because it has "a tendency to strengthen ... government by increasing the number of ligaments between

the government and the interests of individuals."

Douglas Adair, editor of an edition of *The Federalist Papers*, wrote in his introduction that as treasury secretary, "Hamilton transformed every financial transaction of the Treasury Department into an orgy of speculation and graft in which selected senators, congressmen, and certain of their richer constituents ... participated."

Perhaps the best example of this "orgy of speculation" was how Treasury Secretary Hamilton nationalized the state government debt that had been mostly accumulated during the Revolution. New federal government bonds were issued, backed by tariff revenue, and the old debt was to be cashed out at face value. At the time, the bonds were trading at between two and 20 percent of face value and many of them were owned by Revolutionary War veterans who were paid partly in gov-

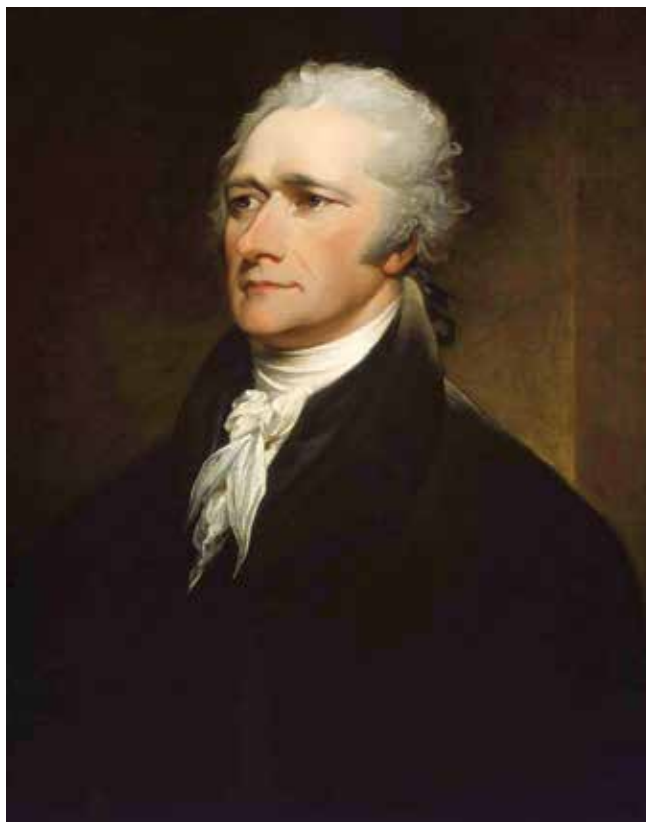
ernment bonds. This plan "immediately became public knowledge in New York City," wrote John Steele Gordon in *Hamilton's Blessing*. But "news of it spread only slowly ... to the rest of the country," said Gordon.

A tremendous arbitrage opportunity was therefore established whereby the New York/Philadelphia/New England business and political establishment (i.e., the Federalists) could enrich themselves by purchasing the bonds from unsuspecting war veterans for as little as two percent of face value and then cashing them in at 100 percent of face value. As historian Claude Bowers explained in *Jefferson and Hamilton: The Struggle for Democracy in America*,

Expresses [i.e., stage coaches] with very large sums of money on their way to North Carolina for purposes of speculation in certificates splashed and bumped over wretched winter roads.... Two fast-sailing vessels, chartered by a member of Congress who had been an officer in the war, were ploughing the waters southward on a similar mission.

Among the men who became instantly wealthy — or more wealthy — through this scam, according to Bowers, were "leading members of Congress who knew that provision for the redemption of the paper [at full face value] had been made." New York newspapers estimated that Morris himself made \$18 million in the deal; New York Governor George Clinton pocketed \$5 million; and Hamilton also participated by "purchasing bonds through buying agents in Philadelphia and New York." This was the first major *political* insider trading scandal in America.

Fourteen years after Hamilton's death, Thomas Jefferson published a February 4, 1818 essay (in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings*) in which he explained what he thought Hamilton and



Youthful disciple: Alexander Hamilton had been fascinated by urban industry and finance from a young age, and allied himself with the older Robert Morris in pushing for a national banking system.

his fellow Federalists had really been up to. Noting that the Hamiltonian speculators used “the most fraudulent practices and persuasions” to get their hands on the war veterans’ bonds, Jefferson believed it was about more than just becoming wealthy. “Men thus enriched by the dexterity of a leader,” he wrote, “would follow of course the chief who was leading them to fortune, and thus become zealous instruments of all his [political] enterprises.” Moreover, it made Hamilton “the master of every vote in the legislature which might give the government the direction suited to his political views.”

But the nationalization of the state debt was a one-time event, Jefferson noted, and the political power created by the scheme “would be lost with the loss of the individual members whom it had enriched” (through retirement or death). “Some engine of influence more permanent must be contrived,” said Jefferson. That would be a central bank, he said.

Jefferson then described a conversation he had had with Hamilton, Secretary of War Henry Knox, John Adams, and Attorney General Edmund Randolph at a dinner party in 1791, “for the truth of which I attest the God who made me.” He recalled Adams saying, “purge that [British] constitution of its corruption ... and it would be the most perfect constitution ever devised by the wit of man.” Hamilton objected by saying, “Purge it of its corruption ... & it would become an impracticable government; as it stands at present, with all its supposed defects, it is the most perfect government that ever existed.” Hamilton was “so bewitched & perverted by the British example,” wrote Jefferson, “as to be under thoro’ conviction that corruption was essential to the government.” Because of this, and Hamilton’s preference for a permanent president, Jefferson concluded that Hamilton was not just for monarchy, but “monarchy bottomed on corruption,” the cornerstone of which was to be a central bank modeled after the Bank of England.

The First Bank of the United States was created in 1791, despite

the fact that Secretary of State Jefferson and Attorney General Edmund Randolph told President Washington that it was, in their opinions, unconstitutional. It was not among the delegated powers in the Constitution, they pointed out, and the Constitutional Convention *had* discussed the idea and rejected it.

Hamilton responded to their seemingly indisputable, factual arguments by claiming that there are mysterious “implied powers” hidden in the Constitution, discoverable by clever lawyers such as himself, paving the way for virtually unlimited governmental powers in the name of vague “general welfare” goals.

Hamilton’s permanent engine of corruption, the Bank of the United States (BUS), was nevertheless supported by fellow Federalist George Washington and given an initial 20-year charter beginning in February of 1791. It was modeled after the failed Bank of North America, and its first president was the same man who was

president of the Bank of North America, former Morris business partner Thomas Willing of Philadelphia.

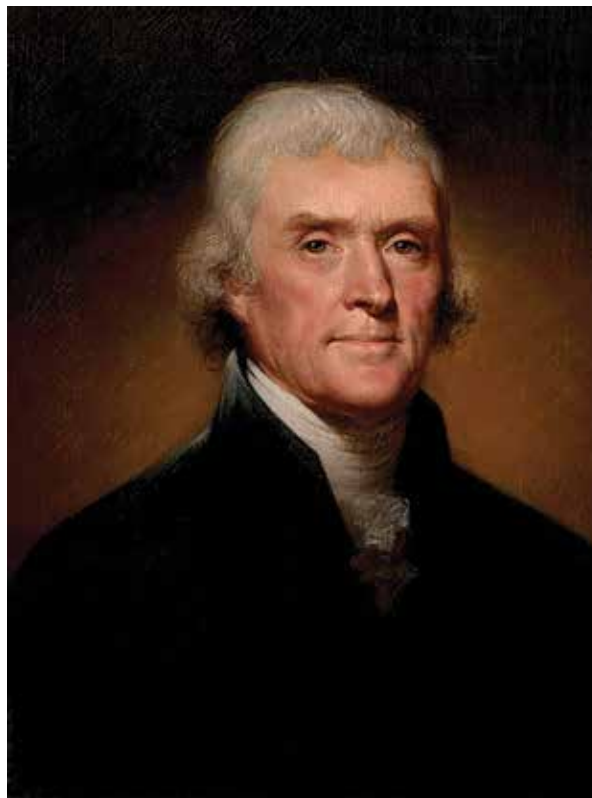
The BUS promptly did what central banks do. As explained by Murray Rothbard in *A History of Money and Banking in the United States*,

The Bank of the United States promptly fulfilled its inflationary potential by issuing millions of dollars in paper money and demand deposits [i.e., checking accounts], pyramiding on top of \$2 million in specie. The Bank of the United States invested heavily in loans to the United States government. In addition to \$2 million invested in the assumption of pre-existing long-term debt assumed by the federal government, the Bank of the United States engaged in massive temporary lending to the government, which reached \$6.2 million by 1796. The result ... was an inflationary rise in prices [of] 72 percent” in five years.

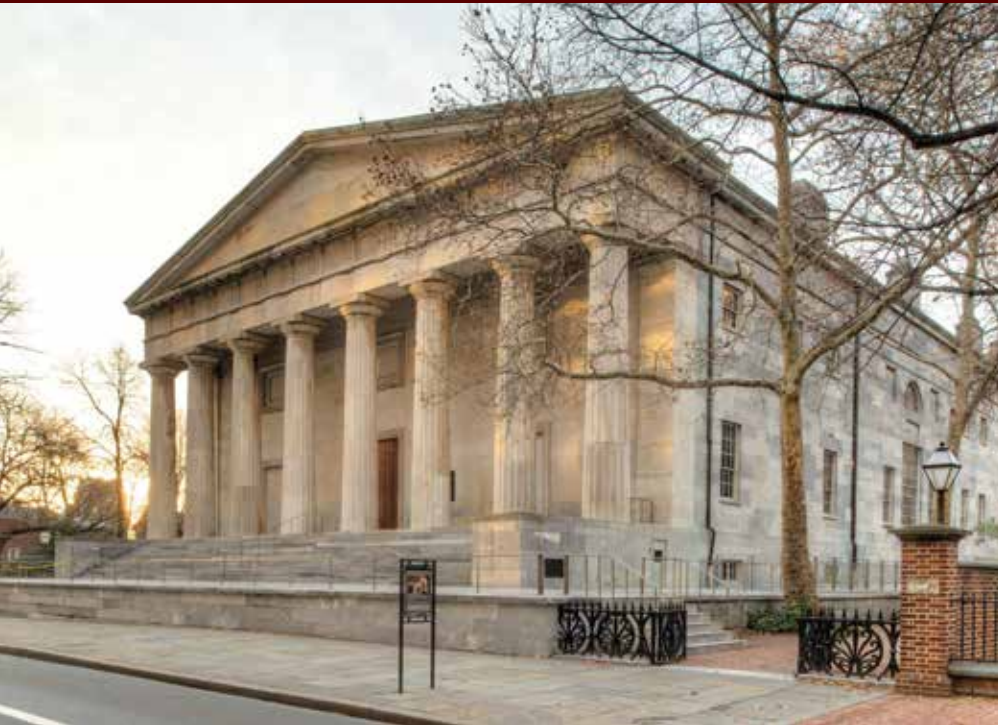
Cheap credit also spawned massive speculation in real estate, causing a real-estate market bubble. Some things never change. After 20 years of generating price inflation, boom-and-bust cycles, real-estate bubbles, and shady political cronyism, the BUS was not rechartered by Congress in 1811. There were still many in Congress who agreed with Jefferson and Randolph that the BUS was unconstitutional. But then the debt accumulated to finance the War of 1812 provided an excuse to resurrect the BUS. The BUS must be resurrected in order to monetize the war debt, it was argued.

Engine of Influence 2.0

The federal government struggled to pay its bills and could not sell sufficient war bonds to pay them. The Second Bank of the United States was created, as even the strict constructionists abandoned their principles and acquiesced in the creation of a second central bank that would lend money to the U.S. Treasury to pay the war debt. The Second Bank



Warning voice: Thomas Jefferson perceived the corruption inherent in central banking, and warned of the untoward motives of Hamilton and his allies in pushing for a national bank for the United States.



wikimedia/Besfurbrian

Pay it upward: The Second Bank of the United States, chartered in 1817 after six years without a central bank, continued the inflationary policies of its predecessors, expanding the money supply by running up debts to pay for the War of 1812 — and lining the pockets of its wealthy beneficiaries.

of the United States began operations in January of 1817.

The first president of the Second BUS was a U.S. Navy captain named William Jones who had no banking experience and had recently gone personally bankrupt. But he was well-connected politically, and was awarded the job despite a complete lack of financial credentials (similar to Hamilton himself). He expanded the money supply by about 40 percent in two years, creating an inflationary boom that turned into a bust known as the Panic of 1819, the first “great depression” in American history, according to Rothbard in *The Panic of 1819*, which lasted two years. Historian William Gouge described what happened: “The bank was saved, and the people were ruined.”

Jones’ successor, Nicholas Biddle, continued to politicize the Second BUS. In *Andrew Jackson and the Bank Wars*, historian Robert Remini documented how Biddle granted below-market-interest-rate loans and “consulting contracts” to members of Congress to literally buy their votes in support of the bank. Henry

Clay was the strongest supporter of a central bank in Congress. After accumulating some \$40,000 in gambling debt, he left Congress for two years to become the general counsel of the bank. In *Henry Clay and the American System*, historian Maurice Baxter wrote that Clay was paid more than enough in two years to pay off his debts. At the time, the *annual* salary of a member of Congress was less than \$3,000.

Senator Daniel Webster demanded “a retainer” from the bank as a condition of voting for it, according to Baxter. When President Andrew Jackson opposed the bank in the late 1820s, Biddle financed the campaigns of Jackson’s congressional opponents and financed “internal improvement” projects in districts of congressmen in return for their support. He also paid for the publication of Henry Clay’s speeches in praise of the bank.

All of this corruption, cronyism, and economic destruction caused by the first two central banks ignited a populist uprising against the BUS led by President Jackson, with the help of the people of quite a few states. Indiana and Illinois

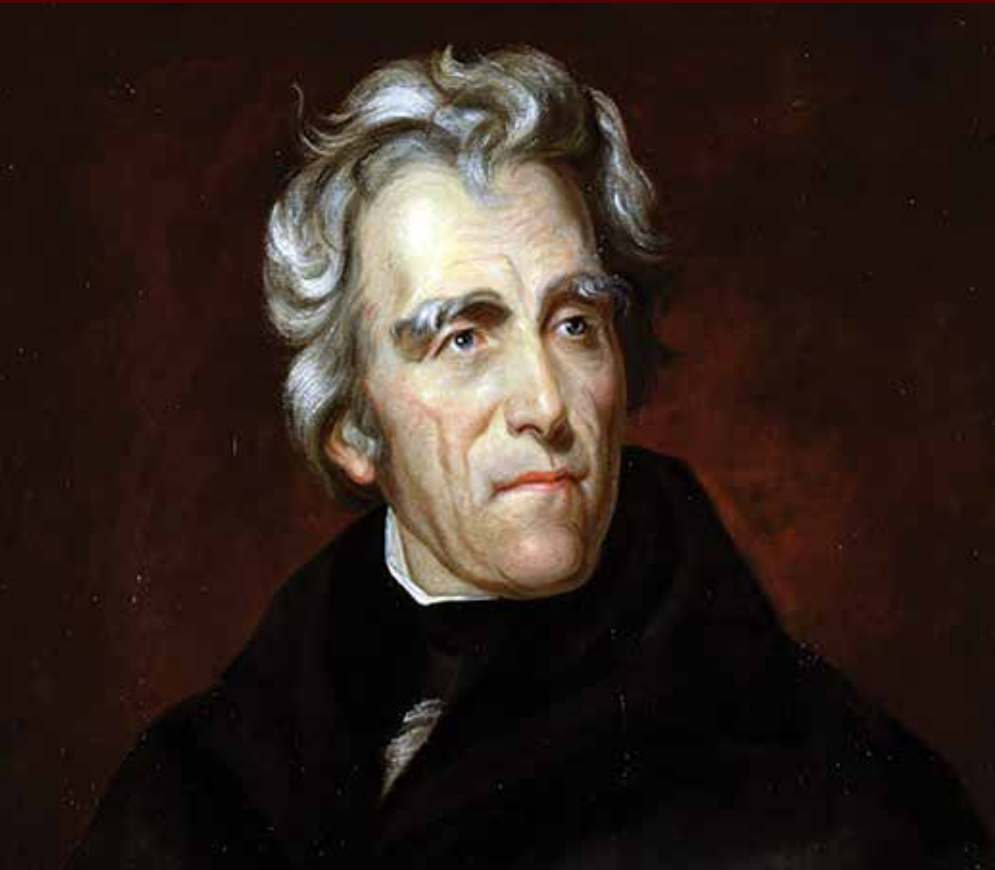
amended their constitutions to prohibit the Bank of the United States from operating within their borders. North Carolina, Georgia, Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio imposed onerous taxes on the bank — \$50,000 per year for each of two branches of the bank in Ohio. New York and New Hampshire adopted resolutions for the bank’s abolition.

When the BUS refused to pay the \$50,000 annual tax on each of its branches, the state of Ohio sent an armed marshal into the bank with a large trunk. He walked into the vault, filled the trunk with \$100,000, and walked out. No wonder John Marshall famously said that “the power to tax is the power to destroy.” He understood that Ohioans and others wanted to tax the BUS out of existence.

In the 1819 case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*, Chief Justice Marshall declared that the BUS *was* constitutional. President Jackson responded, “To this conclusion I cannot assent. Congress and the president as well as the Court must each for itself be guided by its own opinion of the Constitution.... The opinion of the judges has no more authority over Congress than the opinion of Congress has over the judges, and on that point the president is independent of both.”

This was the majority view in all states prior to the Civil War. Yes, there was judicial review by the Supreme Court, but it was understood that there are *three* branches of government, not one. The people of the sovereign states also had an equal say in such matters. In *The Sovereign States*, James J. Kilpatrick quoted an 1821 resolution by a committee of the Ohio Legislature saying, “The committee are aware of the doctrine, that the Federal courts are exclusively vested with jurisdiction to declare, in the last resort, the true interpretation of the Constitution.... To this doctrine ... they [the committee] can never give their assent.” Never! This was in the spirit of the 1798 Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, authored by Madison and Jefferson respectively, which nullified the Adams administration’s Sedition Act that essentially outlawed free political speech. It wasn’t until after the Civil War that the federal government became the sole arbiter of the limits of its own powers through its Supreme Court.

All of this opposition to central banking



De-banking America: Andrew Jackson, opponent of central banking, staked his second presidential term on scuttling the Second Bank of the United States and defeating its imperious president, Nicholas Biddle. After defeating Biddle, Jackson became the only U.S. president to pay off the national debt, in 1835.

led President Jackson to veto the BUS's recharter. In his July 10, 1832 veto message, he stated,

It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes.... Every man is equally entitled to protection by the law; but when the laws undertake to add to ... natural and just advantages artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society ... who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their Government.... If [government] would confine itself to equal protection ... it would be an unqualified blessing. In

the act before me [the recharter of the BUS] there seems to be a wide and unnecessary departure from these just principles.

America's disastrous beginnings with central banking had come to an end, and the bank was defunded over the next several years. However, Henry Clay and the Whig Party — the party of big business, big banks, and big cronyism from the 1830s to the 1850s — commenced another crusade to resurrect central banking. This time it was led by Clay, who proudly championed the Hamiltonian "American System" as the political cornerstone of the Whig Party. After Clay's death, the crusade was continued by Abraham Lincoln and the Republican Party.

Permanent Corruption

It was not until 1913, however, that the

crusade would finally succeed, with the creation of the Federal Reserve System. In a replay of the first years of the Second Bank of the United States, the new "Fed" monetized the debt incurred to finance American participation in World War I, creating another inflationary boom in doing so, which once again turned into a bust, in the form of the Great Depression of 1920, which was even worse in terms of unemployment than the first year of the better-known Great Depression of the 1930s.

Thomas Jefferson knew what he was talking about when he surmised that central banking was a permanent engine of influence. As just one recent example of this, consider what David Stockman said about the Fed-orchestrated bailouts of big investment banks such as Goldman Sachs during the "Great Recession" of 2008 in *The Great Deformation: The Corruption of Capitalism in America*. After being handed \$10 billion by the government, the company "swiveled on a dime and generated a \$29 billion financial surplus," including \$16 billion *in salary and bonuses*, just three months after the bailout. Goldman Sachs said the bailout was necessary to "save it from extinction," writes Stockman. In reality, the threat of extinction was propaganda cover for the incredible selfishness and greed of Goldman Sachs executives and their political conspirators in government — including the Fed.

The insurance company AIG also threatened extinction unless bailed out for its foolish business decisions. It was handed \$180 billion (!), although, as Stockman shows, 90 percent of the business was solvent. There was therefore no need to give AIG a dime from the government. As with Goldman Sachs, the AIG bailout was "all about protecting short-term earnings and current-year executive bonuses."

Two hundred thirty-two years of central bank corruption is about as permanent as things can get with American government. It makes one think that the whole purpose of central banking is not "stabilization policy" or "fighting" inflation and unemployment, as economists contend, but corruption for the benefit of the banker class and its political patrons — at great expense of and misery for everyone else. ■

Homeless Crisis in Long Beach

FOXLA.com reported on June 24 about a woman in Long Beach, California, whose aggressive behavior got her killed.

Forty-four-year-old Andrea Powell allegedly was causing trouble throughout the neighborhood. Neighbors didn't recognize the woman, and her behavior led to many 911 calls. Police received reports of a crazy woman yelling nonsense at people, trying to force her way into houses, and cornering people in a menacing manner. Investigators are reviewing all the evidence of Powell's rampage that night, including video from Ring doorbell cameras that show her actions at multiple homes in the area. One video showed her trying to enter someone's backyard while brandishing a large stick before being chased away by a dog.

According to the Long Beach Police Department, a female homeowner was outside her house when Powell allegedly came up from behind her and started attacking her. The victim's neighbor intervened to try to stop the assault, and Powell began attacking him. In fear for his life, the neighbor shot Powell, who died at the scene.

While neighbors were shocked by this violence, it is part of an alarming trend in the area that many say is related to the growing homeless population. FOXLA.com reported that just a few weeks earlier, a homeless man was shot by police after attacking several people with a screwdriver. It was not clear from the reporting if Powell was homeless, but her behavior that night and the fact that none of the residents in the area recognized her might indicate that she was. The Long Beach City Council even declared a state of emergency earlier this year due to the large numbers of homeless people gravitating to the area. According to the *Long Beach Post*, the homeless population “grew by 62% from 2020 to 2022.” Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson said, “The pandemic has exacerbated that crisis, and when you add that on top of skyrocketing housing costs, inflation and the mental health crisis manifesting itself on our streets, we are in a state of emergency.”

Sadly, the increase in the homeless population appears to have led to an increase in violent crime. In February, the *Long Beach Press-Telegram* cited statements by public officials that substance abuse and mental-health issues among the homeless contribute to the violent-crime problem. Homeless Services Bureau Director Paul Duncan told the *Press Telegram*, “I've personally seen a drastic increase in the last six months.... There have been multiple shootings in addition to the homicides.”

The investigation into the Powell shooting is still ongoing, but from the known facts so far, it appears the resident who shot her acted lawfully.

“Stupidest Thing” Ever Said by a Politician?

Joe Biden has made some laughable statements during his presidency, but his most recent gaffe got quite a reaction from nationally syndicated radio host and former NRA spokesperson Dana Loesch.

Biden was giving a speech in which he boasted of his administration's efforts to push gun control, which included additional restrictions on the purchase of guns with pistol stabilizing braces. Biden stammered when trying to pronounce “braces,” and said Democrats had “made it harder for people buy stabilized brief — braces,” which he claimed are dangerous because they can change the caliber of a gun. “Put a pistol on a brace, it turns into a gun, makes it more, you can have a higher-caliber weapon, higher-caliber bullet coming out of that gun,” Biden said.

Loesch took to Twitter, where she mocked Biden for getting his facts plain wrong. “This is the stupidest thing I've ever heard a politician say about guns. A plastic brace on a gun does not change the CALIBER OF THE GUN or the rate of fire,” Loesch tweeted.

Many others agreed with her assessment, including one Twitter user who asked, “Where are the fact checkers now?”

Defund the ATF

The *Washington Times* reported on June 26 that Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) and Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) announced a new measure for the House Appropriations Committee that would defund the salary of Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Director Steve Dettelbach.

Gaetz conducted a field hearing in Florida involving multiple witnesses speaking about the ATF's overreach and heavy-handed tactics that have infringed on Americans' gun rights. Gaetz explained that the measure would eliminate the ATF director's salary to “constrain resources that would otherwise be used to put people out of business and to harm our fellow Americans.” The measure doesn't have a high likelihood of being enacted, but it at least sheds more light on the threats posed to gun rights by the ATF.

Pro-Second Amendment Rapper

The *Blaze* reported on June 22 about a rapper who recognized the importance of the Second Amendment. The rapper, who goes by the name Killer Mike, stated that he is opposed to any new gun laws, and he actually wants to see increased gun ownership among the black community. Killer Mike made the remarks while being interviewed by TMZ, where he explained that he's “a strong proponent for [the] Second Amendment, people know that.... I think that there are enough laws on the books to take care of what's already out there. Criminals are not going to follow a law anyway.”

Killer Mike told TMZ, “I'm simply going by the rules that were given to me in the Constitution. Nothing more, nothing less.”

While Killer Mike seems to have the right perspective on the Second Amendment, he was apparently an ardent supporter of Bernie Sanders, even though Sanders was stridently pro-gun control. ■

— Patrick Krey

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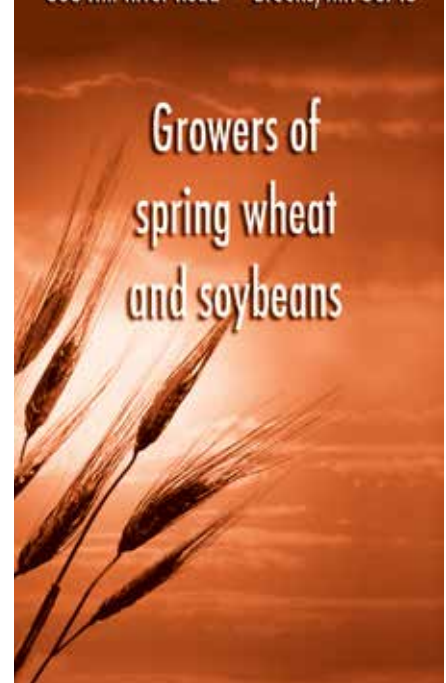


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THE REVIEW

Who's in Charge Here?

by William P. Hoar

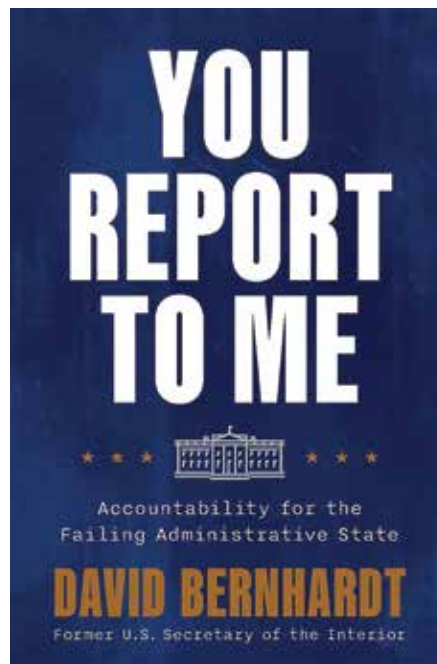
You Report to Me: Accountability for the Failing Administrative State, by David Bernhardt, New York: Encounter Books, 2023, 272 pages, hardcover.

You shouldn't blame the mess in Washington on one person: It takes real teamwork. Unfortunately, the denizens of the federal swamp play by their own rules and for their own team — regardless of whomever is elected.

What do they do? Pretty much what they want. Their numbers grow, they boast of their untouchability, and they are aided by many in the capital unable or unwilling to execute their constitutional duties to rein in the “civil servants” of the federal bureaucracy.

This is not a book of bombastic broadsides or ranting reproaches. This doesn't mean the author's criticisms are weak or toothless, but they come with first-person commentary that is more lawyerly and carefully delivered than most of the haranguing pervasive in D.C.

When insiders expose what is going on in our government — and that is what we



have here — it is worth paying attention. And David Bernhardt was long inside the administrative state that he assesses and, frequently and deservedly, rebukes. *You Report to Me: Accountability for the Failing Administrative State* covers his personal experiences over the years, observations on the bureaucracy, and suggestions on restoring leadership and accountability.

Bernhardt served as interior secretary under President Donald Trump, as well as deputy secretary and solicitor of the Department of the Interior; he also spent nearly

eight years as a political appointee at Interior within the George W. Bush administration, and served as the commissioner to the International Boundary, U.S. and Canada.

The book's title is drawn from the response made by President Trump when Bernhardt was tapped to act as Interior secretary following the resignation of Ryan Zinke. In the Oval Office, Bernhardt asked the chief executive a direct question. To whom does he really report? It was a logical query considering Bernhardt's previous experiences with many staff personnel who acted as intermediaries in the White House. Trump answered, and then repeated, “You report to me.”

During the Bush years, Bernhardt had found that it was “often a lengthy and difficult process for a cabinet secretary to get an idea or an initiative before the president. The process took even longer when the White House staff held a policy view different from that of the cabinet secretary.” His subsequent personal interactions with Trump in this regard were positive, per the book. Trump was “accessible when you needed his input, his counsel, or a decision, and he was more than able to contact you whenever he had an issue he wanted to be addressed.”

State Grows, Becomes Less Answerable

On the other extreme is the accountability, or lack thereof, of a goodly segment

of agency staff. As the author notes, the “federal bureaucracy is dominated by ideological liberals,” and, making matters worse, their superiors are aware that they are almost impossible to fire. The career staff, of course, know that too. According to official statistics (covering 2020), all federal agencies dismissed fewer than 4,000 out of 1.6 million tenured civil-service employees.

One favorite way for career staffers to ensure that they cannot be dismissed is to file a (usually bogus) complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). You might call this a protection racket. About 15,000 of these complaints are filed annually. But in 2019, we learn, actual discrimination was found in fewer than 200 of these. Bernhardt is on target when he notes that such complaints “have essentially become a form of de facto employment protection.”

In a chapter about unaccountable bureaucracy, Bernhardt lays out more of the facts of life in Washington:

Federal employees know that dismissing them for all but the worst offenses is prohibitively difficult. One result is that career employees can often pursue their own policy goals without repercussions. The ability of career civil servants to advance their own agendas and frustrate policy initiatives they dislike has been well documented.

Cited, for example, is staff being encouraged — as if they needed to be — to wear black because Hillary Clinton was beaten by Donald Trump. Even left-wing publications, both from this country and elsewhere, acknowledged that career U.S. employees were, for instance, “wondering how they can make life more difficult” for incoming President Trump; another reported that career staff “had found ways to obstruct, slow down or simply ignore their new leader, the president.”

While the book is not overly loaded with statistics, the ones it does include help give perspective of the makeup and growth of the federal government. Back when the author was first considering a career in public policy (1990), as he recalls, the national debt was \$3.2 trillion; when he was writing this book, the total

(for 2022) was computed at \$29 trillion. The debt-to-GDP ratio over that period leaped from 54 percent to a staggering, frightening 123 percent. (As we were reviewing the book, the rapidly rising national debt topped \$32 trillion.)

As suggested above, the prose is not likely to give readers electric sparkles or indrawn gasps, leaving them nearly exploding with anticipation for the next paragraph. The author, after all, is a lawyer.

Rather, this volume — a memoir/re-alpolitik rendering — does well what it intends: It exposes, with precision, a dysfunctional administrative state.

It reinforces what more Americans have discovered, to their dismay: A new election does not sweep clean, not by a long shot. Yes, the relatively smaller number of political appointees can usually be asked to leave at any time. But such appointees are, as we read, a very small fraction of the U.S. federal workforce. “At the Department of Interior,” writes Bernhardt, “we had about 65,000 full-time employees and about ninety political appointees. Across the government, there are about 3,800 political appointees out of 2.2 million civilian federal workers.”

Pomeranians on the Northern Border

As it happens, it was the disputed dismissal of a political appointee that led to a curious episode during the George W. Bush administration, and in turn serves as the source of an odd tidbit in the book. It involved Bernhardt’s appointment as commissioner of the International Boundary Commission, U.S. and Canada. The appointment word came from the White House at a time when Bernhardt was already Interior’s solicitor. Astonished, he was also about to become commissioner of a body that he had never heard of, when his Canadian knowledge “began and ended with the fact that my wife was born in Toronto.”

There was real concern that the new commissioner might have to “seize” the office from his predecessor. The incumbent, Dennis Schornack, didn’t want to be removed and was challenging the move legally. (As it happened, switching locks did the immediate job.) Apparently, we are told, the incumbent had “gotten sideways” with the administration while in this post. Without going into too many details here of what might be called a shaggy-dog story, Bernhardt summarizes the precipitating incident as follows: Schornack reportedly had told



David Bernhardt

AP Images



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Stymied: While Donald Trump tried to drain the federal bureaucratic swamp, his efforts were resisted from day one. Many of the improvements he did make have been reversed by the Biden administration.

— because he has just been talking with an “endangered species expert” at the Fish and Wildlife Service. The secretary asked the FWS employee what her job was, and she earnestly replied, “I speak for the mice! I speak for the mice!”

Civil Servants Undermine Elected Leaders

The cycle of delegation is well covered in *You Report to Me*. It produces unelected rulemakers. Then when lawmakers delegate, and the judiciary also delegates, this sequence creates more powerful agencies. Even at that agency level there is more delegation, with decisions being made within by true believers — in their own personal causes.

This book is certainly not an unceasing diatribe against those who work for the government as a career. Indeed, Bernhardt emphasizes that it is his belief that the “vast majority of these liberal civil servants set aside their policy views to serve their country honorably.” Nor could this be considered a particularly partisan volume. As the author has found, the “status quo of the swamp has defenders in both parties.” He also points the finger at the “political leaders of both parties” for their “longstanding failure ... to guide agency decision making in accordance with the law and to hold civil service members accountable for their job performance.”

That said, there are numerous examples provided about how career employees did dig in to try to stymie policies of the Trump administration that they opposed. One of the chapters of *You Report to Me* citing such instances leans heavily on a report by the America First Policy Institute, where Bernhardt now serves as chairman of the Center for American Freedom.

Should you find yourself in a position to be a political appointee, *You Report to Me* has plenty of suggestions on how to do things better. Beyond those specific points, Bernhardt correctly insists that we already have “a blueprint for accountable government.” This is to be found in the U.S. Constitution’s “separation of powers and the oath taken by every career civil servant, every executive appointee, every member of Congress, and every federal judge. They each must start doing their respective jobs ‘well and faithfully.’ They report to you and me.” ■

an elderly woman in Blaine, Washington, that she had to tear down a small retaining wall she had built on her property. Schornack believed it encroached into an area known as the vista, a ten-foot-wide zone on either side of the border with Canada. The woman wanted a wall so that her many Pomeranians would not wander on the street across the border.

The erstwhile commissioner, who was still insisting on hanging onto the title, sued the president’s authority to replace him. Litigation was lengthy. Only in America, eh? Perhaps the ousted commish should have hired a legal-eagle border collie and barked about discrimination.

Federal Job: “I Speak for the Mice!”

Though *You Report to Me* involves a goodly number of major and important issues, some of the ostensibly humble events might prove more memorable and help to drive home the essential principles involved.

For instance, in a section where Bernhardt is emphasizing the need for the federal government to be closer to the people it serves, we read of a senior career official of the Bureau of Land Management

(BLM), based in Washington, D.C., who seemed to be beside himself with excitement because he was going to take a trip to the West and would be able to see sagebrush. No, he wasn’t personally saving some threatened sage grouse. He was said to be thrilled just to be able to look at the ecosystem — perhaps the West’s most important native plant, covering around 165 million acres across more than a dozen states. That exhilarated him.

As it happens, Bernhardt eventually moved the BLM headquarters to Grand Junction, Colorado. (The previous secretary had tried to get that ball rolling, but recalcitrant staff who liked being in D.C. dragged their heels for two years.)

Not surprisingly, the Biden administration — as it did in response to multiple moves made by the Trump team — went the opposite way. As we read in *You Report to Me*, “In September 2021, my successor as secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, announced her intention to return the national BLM headquarters to Washington.”

In a chapter about draining the federal bureaucratic swamp, the author recounts another example that represents an endemic problem. Words are on repeat in Bernhardt’s brain during this 2020 episode

Global Tax? Get US Out!



by William S. Hahn,
CEO of The John Birch Society

There are no two ways about it: The United Nations is a worldwide cancer that threatens to consume freedom anywhere it is found. What feeds this cancer is seemingly unlimited funding from its members, predominantly the United States. If the UN gets the power to tax, then the cancer will metastasize throughout the world, eventually ushering in world government.

To extract the cancer of the UN, we must merely dry up its source of revenue. The UN exists only because of the funding and the credibility afforded to it by its members. Renouncing our UN membership would send shockwaves through the global community. Legislation to do just that first appeared in 1981, with Representative Larry McDonald (D-Ga.) introducing the “United Nations Termination Act.” We have had the “American Sovereignty Restoration Act,” which would repeal the “UN Participation Act of 1945” as well as other agreements and legislation passed by Congress that have entangled us with the UN.

In 1960, two years after founding The John Birch Society, Robert Welch wrote, “And one thing is certain. If the American people ever do wake up to what is happening to them, and how, or if they ever come to realize what the United Nations is designed to accomplish and what it is really like, that army of slippery Soviet stooges now so arrogantly running the show will need to scurry homeward fast. Our apathy is extreme, and our patience seemingly inexhaustible. But there are ends to all moods, and limits to all endurance.”

The John Birch Society’s longest-standing project is to “Get US Out! of the United Nations.” We believe that once the United States leaves, the UN will become toothless and eventually collapse, taking with it many decades of globalist progress that has built world government infrastructure. Unfortunately, according to various polls, most Americans are in favor of America’s



Gareth Lowndes/Stock/Getty Images Plus

UN membership, even though a large majority think the UN is doing a terrible job. If more Americans knew that the policies of the UN were the trigger for much of the damage being done in their local community (sex education, Common Core, Agenda 21/2030, attacks on property rights, etc.), then more Americans would wake up.

Yet, a skeptic might point out that the lack of U.S. presence would create a vacuum that China would gladly fill and make the UN worse. But how much worse would it really get? Communists and socialists already control the direction of the UN, with China having substantial leadership. Every single UN secretary-general either has been or is a communist or socialist.

The controlling agenda of the UN has made large progress for world domination already. (See the list of “accomplishments” in Art Thompson’s *The United Nations: Unity Through Tyranny*, pages 32-33.)

The UN’s many initiatives and agendas are created to affect and control all lives. Concocted crises, such as “climate change” and “pandemics,” lead to additional government interference, building unconstitutional government at home that will lead to world government. Such government growth brings to mind the words of our Founders regarding the oppression they faced under King George III: “He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.”

To take action on this, let’s suggest following the example of the Founding Fathers. They spent 15 years making the case for independence before the time was right to fight. They made that case through educating the people utilizing various communication avenues, disseminating literature, and creating organized committees to sustain the efforts.

The John Birch Society follows this very model. We’re ready to double down on our efforts to pull out of the UN. Are you? Start by telling Congress to reintroduce and pass the American Sovereignty Restoration Act at JBS.org. ■

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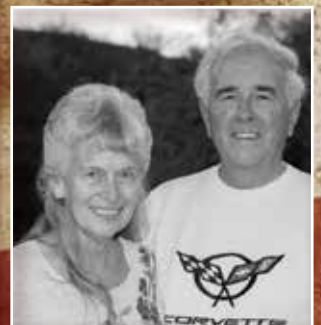
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