|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Jihad Report  Jul 07, 2018 - Jul 13, 2018 | |
| Attacks | **46** |
| Killed | **410** |
| Injured | **519** |
| Suicide Blasts | **6** |
| Countries | **12** |

**The Owners of Earth**

NASA’s administrator is a strong defender of President Donald Trump’s proposals for space -- including an armed force and a permanent presence on the moon -- and says he wants Americans to realize how much their well-being depends on what happens far above Earth.

“Every banking transaction requires a GPS signal for timing,” Jim Bridenstine said in an interview. “You lose the GPS signal and guess what you lose? You lose banking.”

“If you look at what space is, it’s not that much different than the ocean,” added Bridenstine, who made 333 aircraft-carrier landings as a Navy pilot. “It’s an international domain that has commerce that needs to be protected.”

Bridenstine was in his third term representing a congressional district in Oklahoma when Trump nominated him to lead the $21 billion space agency. He was confirmed in the spring despite criticism over his lack of scientific or engineering experience and his previous statements questioning climate change science -- though he said in hearings that human activity was the chief cause of global warming.

Last summer, when he was still in Congress, Bridenstine supported a measure that would have created a “space corps.” It passed the House but was removed from the final defense spending bill. Then last month, Trump called for the Pentagon to develop [a sixth branch](https://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2018-06-18/trump-s-nasa-moon-shot-may-start-with-robots-before-astronauts) of the American armed services that would protect national and commercial interests in space.

Hold Your Rockets: Trump Space Force Could Take Years to Launch

Trump’s [surprise announcement](https://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2018-06-18/new-space-force-would-add-to-already-stretched-defense-budget) caught Pentagon officials and members of Congress off guard. The Defense Department already has several major programs in the works and the Air Force has contended that a new branch was not necessary for space defense. Senator Bill Nelson, a Florida Democrat who once took part in a space shuttle mission, [tweeted](https://twitter.com/senbillnelson/status/1008772824054620163?lang=en): "generals tell me they don’t want" it and "now is NOT the time to rip the Air Force apart."

**Rumsfeld Commission**

How to establish U.S. security in space has been debated for at least two decades. An independent commission -- led by Donald Rumsfeld before he became defense secretary -- [reported](http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA404328) in 2001 that "in the longer term it may be met by a military department for space."

Some 60 different agencies within the defense establishment play roles in space-related work, said Todd Harrison, director of the Aerospace Security Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. That may slow the realization of Trump’s goal. “This isn’t going to happen quickly.” Harrison said.

[Related: NASA Left Adrift as Its Return to Human Spaceflight Closes In](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-03-02/nasa-left-adrift-as-trump-s-pick-to-run-the-agency-languishes)

Laura Grego, a senior scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists who works on space security, said that the idea of a space force means different things to different people -- headache-inducing bureaucratic reorganization to some, federal and commercial asset protection to others, and militarization of space for still others. Congress asked the Pentagon to conduct a study on the issue, which is expected to be completed next month.

"It does seem premature to have a solution before you’ve seen the study that you’ve asked for," she said.

**Pentagon Preparations**

The Pentagon is responding to Trump’s directive. “Our policy board will begin working on this issue, which has implications for intelligence operations for the Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy,” said Army Lieutenant Colonel Jamie Davis, a Defense Department spokesman. “Working with Congress, this will be a deliberate process with a great deal of input from multiple stakeholders.”

Bridenstine said creation of a space force wouldn’t interfere with programs or funding at his agency. Trump’s ambition to modernize the way the federal government regulates commercial use of space has drawn normally far-flung agencies into one conversation. NASA, the departments of Commerce, Defense, Transportation and other agencies are all realigning their space-related activities, directed by three White House Space Policy Directives issued since December.

A Deloitte [analysis](https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/public-sector/us-ps-challenge-ahead-for-the-administration-and-regulation-reform-in-the-space-industry.pdf) from June found that regulations related to space are densely networked and can’t be changed without considering lots of others, too. "With every space regulation the government must consider at least seven other regulations, on average. But it gets more complicated, as each of those seven regulations have their own citations, which also have their own citations, and so on," the Deloitte authors said.

With private companies confidently pursuing many ventures involving space commerce and travel, NASA has been casting its eyes toward the moon, Mars and beyond.

Trump “wants our return to the moon to be sustainable,” Bridenstine said. “We are not going to leave the moon as we did in 1972,” the date of the last U.S. landing there.

Bridenstine is also looking beyond the International Space Station, which the U.S. plans to turn over to the private sector in the next decade, to the construction of permanent infrastructure above and around the moon.

**Kirk and Picard**

Permanent infrastructure for the moon cannot be realized without international partners, he said, pointing out the two-decade U.S.-Russian collaboration on the space station. That partnership has weathered tumultuous periods in the two countries’ relations, including the tense period of sanctions that began after Moscow’s annexation of Crimea.

“China is a bit of a different story,” Bridenstine said. “It’s possible that maybe one day they could be involved, but I don’t think right now people are comfortable with that” because of issues that include intellectual property disputes and human rights.

Since 2011, Congress has prohibited NASA employees from collaborating with Chinese counterparts.

As for any future space force, Bridenstine argued that its personnel should have ranks akin to the Navy’s, as in, say, Captains Kirk and Picard of "Star Trek."

“If you look at the science fiction movies, all of the space military folks, they’re all admirals, which is, of course, a Navy rank,” Bridenstine said.

**RR to be Impeached**

Leading Freedom Caucus members Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) and Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) are laying the groundwork to bring articles of impeachment against Rosenstein, as House investigators accuse the Justice Department of stonewalling their requests for documents related to the agency’s surveillance of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign.

[*Politico*](https://www.politico.com/story/2018/07/13/house-republicans-rod-rosenstein-impeachment-719816) writes:

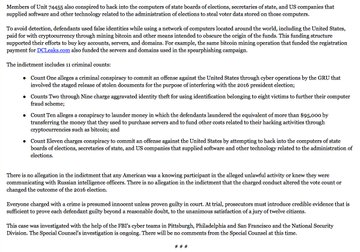
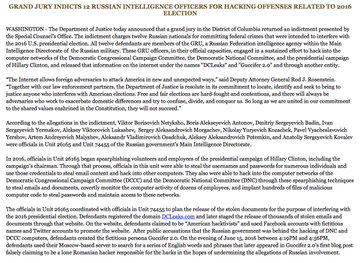
House conservatives are preparing a new push to oust Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, according to three conservative Capitol Hill sources — putting the finishing touches on an impeachment filing even as Rosenstein announced the indictment of 12 Russian intelligence officers for interfering in the 2016 election.

House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows, in fact, had the impeachment document on the floor of the House at the very moment that Rosenstein spoke to reporters and TV cameras Friday.

Reports of the plan come after Rosenstein announced charges Friday against 12 Russian intelligence officers for hacking offenses during the 2016 election and pushed back on allegations that FBI agents are leaking details of the probe to reporters. The Russians are accused of hacking into the computer networks of the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton – then releasing stolen emails on the Internet in the months before the election.

The indictment represents special counsel Robert Mueller’s first charges against Russian government officials for interfering in American politics, an effort U.S. intelligence agencies claim was aimed at helping the Trump campaign and harming his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton. The case follows a separate indictment that accused Russians of using social media to sow discord among American voters.

The 29-page indictment purports how, months before Americans went to the polls, Russians schemed to break into key Democratic email accounts, including those belonging to Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta, the Democratic National Committee, and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Stolen emails, many politically damaging for Clinton, appeared on WikiLeaks in the campaign’s final stretch.

[](https://twitter.com/ABC/status/1017809874841989120/photo/1)

[242](https://twitter.com/intent/like?tweet_id=1017809874841989120" \o "Like)

[155 people are talking about this](https://twitter.com/ABC/status/1017809874841989120" \o "View the conversation on Twitter)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](https://support.twitter.com/articles/20175256)

Rosenstein recently testified before House lawmakers on the details about the Justice Department’s surveillance tactics during the Russia investigation. The House Judiciary Committee hearing marked Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein’s first appearance before Congress since an internal DOJ report criticizing the FBI’s handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation revealed new disparaging text messages among FBI officials about Donald Trump during the 2016 election. FBI Director Christopher Wray also appeared at the hearing. Republicans on the panel grilled the deep state officials on the watchdog report to highlighting bias by the FBI.

“This country is being hurt by it. We are being divided,” Rep. Trey Gowdy (R-SC) said of Mueller’s investigation.  “Whatever you got,” Gowdy added, “Finish it the hell up because this country is being torn apart.”

Rosenstein, who lost his cool at times, raised his voice and wagged his finger while defending himself and the department against allegations of stonewalling. The Justice Department officials claimed despite Republican allegations, he was “not trying to hide anything.”

“We are not in contempt of this Congress, and we are not going to be in contempt of this Congress,” Rosenstein told lawmakers.

Underscoring their merited frustration, Republicans briefly put the hearing on hold so they could approve a resolution on the House floor demanding that the Justice Department turn over thousands of documents within a seven day period.

The resolution that passed along party lines Thursday demanded that the department turn over by July 6 documents on FBI investigations into Clinton’s private email use and Trump campaign ties to Russia. Both investigations unfolded during the presidential election, causing the FBI — which prides itself on independence — to become entangled in presidential politics in ways that are continuing to shake out. Meadows, one of the resolution’s sponsors, did not deny Democratic assertions that the document requests were related to efforts to undercut Mueller’s probe.

“Yes, when we get these documents, we believe that it will do away with this whole fiasco of what they call the Russian Trump collusion because there wasn’t any,” he said on the House floor.

The House judiciary and intelligence panels, which have subpoenaed the documents, want to use the records for congressional investigations into the FBI’s decision to clear Clinton in the email probe and its opening of an investigation into potential coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia. The Justice Department has already turned over more than 800,000 documents to congressional committees, yet the subpoenas seek additional materials, including records about any surveillance of Trump campaign associates.

**Why the Left Wants to Ban ICE**

Cue the outrage: Immigration and Customs Enforcement has just made a huge bust in two border states. According to Fox News, 18 human smugglers and 117 illegal immigrants were detained in raids on safe houses in El Paso, Texas, and the southern part of New Mexico.

The raids happened last month, but were only announced via a statement from ICE on Friday.

“Special agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and agents with U.S. Border Patrol arrested 18 alien smugglers and seized cash, vehicles and more than 1,000 lbs. of marijuana last month in a joint effort,” the statement read.

“Special agents assigned to HSI El Paso’s human smuggling group and Border Patrol agents, who are part of HSI’s Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST), worked together to identify, locate and arrest smugglers operating alien smuggling organizations in southern New Mexico and the El Paso area.”

TRENDING: Bartender Flips Stephen Miller the Bird, So Miller Turns Right Around & Tosses His Meal

“The monthlong enforcement action resulted in the arrest of illegal aliens in three area stash houses from the following countries: Mexico (93), Guatemala (12), Honduras (6), Brazil (3), El Salvador (2) and Peru (1). The seizures included nine vehicles, three tractor-trailers and $20,000 in U.S and Mexican currency.”

“We remain steadfast in our commitment to vigorously pursue members of transnational criminal networks that exploit and endanger people they smuggle into our country,” Jack P. Staton, the special agent in charge of HSI El Paso, is quoted as saying in the statement.

“These smugglers are driven by human greed and heartlessness. HSI will continue to work with our law enforcement partners, such as Border Patrol, to maintain the integrity of our border and nation’s immigration laws.”

“This is a great example of the dedication and cooperation amongst area law enforcement agencies working towards the shared goals of securing our borders, protecting our local communities and our nation,” Deputy Chief Patrol Agent Chris T. Clem of the U.S. Border Patrol-El Paso Sector added.

Two U.S. citizens were among the smugglers arrested. Elias Serrano, 42, had prior offenses for aggravated stalking, kidnapping, possessing a deadly weapon and possessing marijuana with intent to distribute. Jesus Briseno, who is 25, had previously been convicted of escape from custody, possessing marijuana, assault/causing injury to family member and driving while intoxicated. In addition, several of the 117 illegal aliens detained had prior convictions or outstanding warrants for either child endangerment and/or driving while intoxicated.

One was arrested for fraud and misuse of visas and another for entering the U.S. after deportation. Just so we’re clear, this is what we’re dealing with when it comes to illegal immigration. Opposition to it isn’t just driven by racism or for yearning for a bygone era where America was more homogenous. What we’re dealing with is human smugglers who traffic individuals, usually in dangerous conditions.

These smugglers are typically with cartels; Customs and Border Protection spokesman Mike Friel told CNN that the cartels “have a stranglehold on the Mexican side of the border and control much of the land” in July of 2017, after 10 illegal immigrants died in the back of a semi truck when they had no air to breathe.

“There are very few people who attempt to cross on their own,” Friel told CNN, adding that few would “risk going against the cartel.”

These are the same cartels, by the way, which are responsible for drug smuggling and unspeakable violence. Four of the six most dangerous cities in the world are in Mexico, all thanks to cartels which are supported in part by smuggling money.

That’s why illegal immigration needs to be cracked down upon. Forget about abolishing ICE. It’s time to beef it up. And let’s throw in a wall for good measure.

**Why There are no Pro-Trump Rallies in London**

## Police in Sadiq Khan’s London have used the Public Order Act to prevent a rally in support of U.S. President Donald Trump outside the American embassy, despite permitting a large, ill-tempered anti-Trump rally on Friday.

Protestors attending the ‘Welcome Trump’ event had planned to gather outside the embassy and march from there to Whitehall, where they would have joined in with a separate ‘Free Tommy Robinson’ event in support of the activist and independent journalist who was recently [imprisoned](https://www.breitbart.com/london/2018/06/04/delingpole-martyrdom-tommy-robinson/) for contempt of court after reporting on a grooming gang trial.

But the Metropolitan Police Force, which answers to a [large extent](https://www.police.uk/metropolitan/pcc/) to Mayor of London [Sadiq Khan](https://twitter.com/SadiqKhan), used the Public Order Act to impose a raft of restrictions on both groups of protesters which made this impossible —  despite allowing far larger anti-Trump protests at which at least[six people were arrested](https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/988378/Donald-Trump-UK-visit-Oprah-Winfrey-London-protest-President-2020-election) to go ahead on Saturday, with demonstrators carrying signs emblazoned with harsh profanity and messages such as “Die Trump Die”.

“I was planning to go to the American embassy to meet with a group of demonstrators who are planning to welcome Trump into the country… it’s really good to see him in this country, and speaking truth to the people in power in this country,” explained [David Kurten](https://twitter.com/davidkurten), an elected member of the London Assembly for the Brexit-supporting UK Independence Party.

“But as I came out of the police station I was handed this piece of paper by a couple of friendly police officers — who were just doing their job — but they’ve imposed Section 12 Public Order Act conditions on the assembly outside the American embassy, which means that people are not allowed to proceed or have a march or any kind of demonstration,” he claimed.

“And we’ve also been told that if I go to the American embassy in a group of three or more people that I’m liable to be arrested myself — so free speech is dead,” he concluded.

“What this is, is Sadiq Khan not wanting people to express pro-Trump values,” added Young Independence Deputy Chairman [Reece Coombes](https://twitter.com/ReeceUKIP).

“But as soon as probably, essentially only a few thousand of us want to protest in favour of Trump and show our support for the leader of the free world, we are banned, we are silenced, and we are censored.”

Mayor Khan actively encouraged the anti-Trump protests, and was active in the media defending his decision to authorise an “obscene” balloon caricaturing the U.S. President on ground of freedom of speech and the right to protest.

The restrictions on the ‘Welcome Trump’ event are only the latest example of what critics have described as double standards in this area, with the Mayor having previously provided almost £2 million in funding for an “online hate crime hub” for police to tackle [mean comments on the Internet](https://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/08/16/london-mayor-to-set-up-police-online-hate-crime-hub-in-partnership-with-social-media-firms/), and banned fitness supplement adverts [featuring attractive women](https://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/06/13/londons-muslim-mayor-ban-bikini-images-public/) from the London Underground.

**Bubbles**

**Not so long ago, student debt was mostly the responsibility of students.** That is, you paid for college with loans and then paid off those loans with the proceeds of the good job you got with an advanced education.

These days it’s a little different. The cost of higher education is soaring, the jobs available to college grads don’t pay as much, relatively speaking, as they used to, and the size of loans available to students – though huge – don’t cover the full cost of many degrees.

One might expect these changes to lead more students to work for a few years and save up, or choose a cheaper degree, or eschew college altogether (as a lot of successful people now recommend) and substitute work experience for a diploma.

Some of that is happening but apparently the biggest change is that parents have stepped in to cover the difference between what their kids can borrow and the cost of a degree. As the chart below illustrates, until just a few years ago, the average debt of students exceeded that of students’ parents. **But post-Great Recession, parents have given up trying to moderate the cost of their kids’ education and started doing the borrowing themselves. They’re now taking on the majority of new debts, and the gap is widening dramatically.**

Source: Mark Kantrowitz ([*SavingForCollege.com*](http://savingforcollege.com/))

### ****Retirement Crisis?****

**So we can add student loans to the list of instances where people who once tried to control their borrowing have stopped trying and are now just going with the flow.** Which means several things.

***First****, kids who if left to themselves and the market would probably opt for one of the aforementioned cheaper alternatives are still in high-cost, frequently low-reward degree programs, and are being sheltered from the consequences by well-meaning parents.*

***Second****, the retirement crisis that everyone is talking about – in which people who have never saved a penny are approaching retirement age and looking at 30 years of abject poverty – is being made that much worse by parents taking on new debts at a time of life when they should be aggressively trending towards debt-free/cash-rich.*

***Third****and most important for people who aren’t participating in this game of financial musical chairs, the eventual implosion of the student loan market – i.e., the point at which loan defaults become intolerable – will lead to a government bailout, making student loans everyone else’s problem.*

But of course the government won’t raise taxes or otherwise inflict immediate consequences on the electorate. It will borrow the money and create enough new currency to cover the first few years’ interest, leaving the longer-term consequences for later years and other people.

As with all the other mini-bubbles out there, if student loans were an isolated problem in a sea of rock-solid financial behavior they’d be easily managed. But they’re just one of many time bombs set to explode shortly.

**Boston City Council Vote**

The Boston City Council considered Tuesday whether some non-US citizens should be able to vote in municipal elections — a change some say would boost rights for legal immigrants already contributing to their communities, while others expressed concern it would lessen the value of privileges granted to current citizens.

City Council President Andrea Campbell sponsored the hearing, which looked at voting rights for permanent residents, visa holders, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival recipients, and those with Temporary Protected Status.

There is no official proposal yet, and any changes would need approval from the state Legislature and Governor Charlie Baker. Non-US citizens cannot vote under state and federal law. The hearing examined voting as well as other ways the city can increase engagement with immigrants.

“What are concrete steps we can take at the local level to make sure our folks in our immigrant communities are more included, have more direct participation opportunities in their government, and are valued?” said Campbell, when asked why she called for a hearing on the issue.

**The Proceedings:**

Proponents say the proposal shouldn’t be as controversial as some of the immediate public feedback would suggest. From the country’s founding up until the 1920s, [40 states and federal territories](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12134-014-0336-6) allowed non-citizens to vote. But skeptics say it would undermine the inherent value of U.S. citizenship — and could potentially even put some immigrants at risk.

“The right to vote is a privilege reserved for U.S. citizens,” Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn, who opposes the idea, said during a public hearing Tuesday at City Hall. “The right to vote is a unique characteristic and privilege reserved for those individuals who have gone through the extensive citizenship application process.”

To be clear, the council was only discussing providing non-citizens with legal residency the right to vote in local and citywide elections — not state or federal elections.

However, City Council President Andrea Campbell, who [requested Tuesday’s hearing on the subject earlier this week](https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2018/07/08/boston-weighs-giving-legal-non-us-citizens-voting-rights), said that providing certain groups — including permanent legal residents, visa holders, Temporary Protected Status recipients, and Deferred Action Childhood Arrival recipients — that right could be a proactive way to empower local immigrant communities, who feel especially threatened by the immigration policies and rhetoric of President Donald Trump.

“This is an opportunity for us to say, ‘No, we stand with you, we’re listening to you, and we want you to be a part of some of these conversations,'” Campbell said of Tuesday’s hearing.

Karl Becker, a Dorchester resident whose wife is a permanent legal resident from Malaysia, testified that despite being deeply engaged in the community, paying taxes, owning a condo, and calling Boston home, the couple is only half-represented electorally.

“Boston is where the fight against taxation without representation began way back in 1773,” Becker said. “My wife has lived in the U.S. for over 10 years, and currently is experiencing a flavor of taxation without representation.”

Becker, who is a U.S. citizen, said his wife wasn’t asking for the expansion of voting rights to non-citizens. But he was.

The idea is hardly unprecedented.

Every country in the European Union gives citizens of other member countries the right to vote. [Fifteen of the 28 EU countries](http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/kurzdossiers/184711/voting-rights-for-nationals-of-non-eu-states) allow residents who are citizens of non-EU countries to vote, as long as they meet certain residency requirements. Eleven EU countries even allow “third-country nationals” to run for office in local elections.

[According to the National Conference of State Legislatures](http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/non-resident-and-non-citizen-voting.aspx#Non-Citizen%20Voting), there are also a number of American cities that allow non-citizens to vote, in certain capacities, in local elections — including nine in Maryland, perhaps [most notably Takoma Park](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/takoma-park-stands-by-non-us-citizen-voting-law/2012/03/13/gIQAVBcgBS_story.html?utm_term=.26649340ffd0). San Francisco [voted in 2016](http://www.latimes.com/nation/politics/trailguide/la-na-election-aftermath-updates-trail-san-francisco-measure-to-allow-1478692962-htmlstory.html) to allow most voting-age non-citizen parents to vote in local school board elections beginning this November. Chicago has given local, non-citizen parents the right to vote in local school council elections since 1989.

In Massachusetts, the cities of [Amherst](https://www.amherstbulletin.com/Amherst-to-consider-voting-rights-for-noncitizens-8544916), [Brookline](http://brookline.wickedlocal.com/article/20100908/NEWS/309089806), [Cambridge](https://cambridgeimmigrantadvocates.wordpress.com/2017/02/02/municipal-immigrant-voting-rights/), [Newton](http://suffrage-universel.be/us/usvoalmanewton.htm), and, [Wayland](https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/regionals/west/2017/03/24/should-wayland-allow-legal-residents-who-are-not-citizens-vote-town-elections/OnjyBC84okfjQ9hvWWkGEL/story.html) have at certain points passed home-rule petitions to allow non-citizens to vote in municipal elections. However, the moves require state lawmakers to pass [legislation](https://www.wwlp.com/news/local-news/hampshire-county/bill-would-give-non-citizens-the-right-to-vote-in-amherst/1043256832) to actually take effect.

State Rep. Byron Rushing, a Democrat who represents Boston’s South End, filed a bill last month to give cities and towns the authority to allow legal permanent residents to vote in their local elections, if approved by both the municipal legislative body and adopted by voters in a referendum.

“Immigrant families constitute a large portion of working families in the Commonwealth,” Caroline Sherrard, the legislative director for Rushing, testified Tuesday. “They are part of our communities, pay local property taxes, and send their children to local schools. Yet without voting rights, they have no voice in local public policy-making.”

Sherrard said that her boss’s bill was unlikely to pass this year with just three weeks left in the legislative session, but she said that Boston could send a message to lawmakers.

The question, still, is whether it should.

Several councilors mentioned that their offices had received a deluge of phone calls and emails since Tuesday’s hearing was announced Monday. Councilor Kim Janey said she was “disheartened” by the volume of “nasty” anti-immigrant sentiment. However, some immigrant advocates also expressed concern about implementing non-citizen voting in a city as large as Boston.

Veronica Serrato, the executive director of the Boston-based immigrant naturalization initiative Project Citizenship, called the idea “laudable,” but said she believes the benefits would be outweighed by individual risks of deportation.

“The administrative and logistical hurdles in implementing the act required for full participation of non-citizens, so as not to jeopardize their future eligibility to become U.S. citizens, would be immense,” Serrato said.

Given that illegal voting by non-citizen residents can be cause for criminal prosecution or deportation, Serrato said that scaling such an initiative for Boston would necessitate a raft of “specific and thorough” new procedures to fully educate non-citizens so they know not to mistakenly vote in state or federal elections, or in Boston after having moved outside the city limits.

“Someone who has wrongly voted is forever barred from becoming a U.S. citizen,” she said. “Since 2014, we have assisted over 4,400 immigrants to achieve citizenship in Massachusetts, and I’ve personally had to tell two immigrants who had in fact voted in a federal election that they were forever ineligible to become U.S. citizens.”

Serrato, speaking from her experience as a lawyer, also said that while the current proposal in Massachusetts only extends to immigrants with legal status, it can be difficult to determine one’s immigration status. Additionally, Takoma Park, due to its [so-called sanctuary city status](https://takomaparkmd.gov/news-alert/takoma-park-a-sanctuary-city/), does not differentiate between documented and undocumented immigrants in allowing non-citizen residents to vote in local elections, according to City Clerk Jessie Carpenter, who called into the hearing Tuesday. It’s unclear how Boston, which is also a sanctuary city, would go about making and/or enforcing that distinction.

Serrato acknowledged Takoma Park — which has implemented a number of the protections she mentioned, including different voter registration applications, separate municipal elections, and a number of maintenance and oversight processes — as an “excellent example” of how non-citizen voting could be logistically implemented. And Carpenter said the city hasn’t had any incidents of non-citizens voting in state or federal elections.

However, Serrato also noted that Takoma Park has a population of 18,000 and 300 voting non-citizens, while Boston has a population of 673,000 and an estimated 48,000 legal permanent residents.

“The dimensions and enormity of the task are huge,” she said, adding that Boston would be the largest municipality to adopt non-citizen voting citywide (not just for school boards).

A number of local residents, like Becker, with immediate ties to the issue testified Tuesday that, despite the assuredly extensive regulations required, it’s still a noble cause that city officials should consider.

During his testimony, Becker made the point that the extensive process required to obtain legal residency, much less citizenship, shows that only people who “are truly interested in becoming invested in the community” are going to go through with it.

In addition to the time, money, and paperwork, Becker said in an interview after the hearing that he and his wife even had to provide a scrapbook with four years of photos proving they knew each other for her to obtain legal residency after they were married.

“Councilor Flynn said that there was an extensive citizenship process,” he said. “There was also an extensive permanent resident process, and I’ve been part of that. I’ve seen it first-hand.”

Becker said that allowing non-citizens like his wife to vote could make them feel more “bought in to the community” and eliminate a degree a political inequality he feels is somewhat arbitrary.

“She already feels bought into the community, right?” he said. “She lives in Boston, she rides the T, she works, she pays a lot of taxes, we both experience all the greatness that Boston has to offer. But for some reason, when I walk out the door on the first Tuesday of November, I can go somewhere and check a box, but she can’t. But why?”

**Britain First**

Thanks to the exaggerated outrage of the mainstream media and the attention-seeking protests of London leftists, a narrative seems to have set in that the vast majority of British people oppose this week’s visit of President Trump. As a Brit myself, however, I am delighted to confirm this lazy slur could not be further from the truth.

In reality, the vast majority of British conservatives (and a good chunk of floating voters too) are coming to admire Trump. His unmistakable approach to politics – straight-talking, honest and completely fearless – is increasingly viewed with envy by British voters tired of backsliding career politicians. Brits look over the Atlantic and see a leader who actually puts his money where his mouth is – and gets results for it too.

To fully understand Trump’s popularity, you have to look at the current state of British politics. Over two years since the country voted to leave the European Union, we have seen virtually zero progress at delivering on the result of the referendum. Rather than battling with Brussels to return our sovereignty, end uncontrolled immigration, and give a better deal to British business, Theresa May’s government has been paralyzed by infighting, trying desperately to scrap together compromises which keep the establishment forces on side. Earlier this year, a British political journalist revealed that Trump often begins his calls with the Prime Minister by asking “are you out yet?” – and you can see why.

It’s no surprise that Brits are increasingly frustrated with the government’s mishandling of Brexit. What’s more interesting is that when you ask them what kind of leader they want to get us out of this mess, an increasing number are saying the same thing: someone like Trump. Brexit supporters observe how he deals with similar rubbish deals (the Iranian nuclear fiasco, for one) and they realize how much more can be achieved when leaders actually show some muscle.

Then there’s the fact that Trump remains the only international leader to publicly suggest offering Britain a new trade deal – something which is wildly popular with mainstream voters. While Brexit’s critics may paint the vote as insular and backwards, they forget that our biggest motivation for leaving Europe was to strike better trade deals elsewhere. As a businessman, Trump respects this. He has made loud and clear overtures in support of a big deal (unlike President Obama, who famously warned the Brits they would be “at the back of the queue” if they left the EU).

Of course, as with at home in America, Trump is consistently opposed by the liberal media here, who publish hyperbolic attacks on every decision taken by the administration (The Guardian newspaper – once a serious left-wing broadsheet – has even thrown its support behind a puerile campaign to fly a large balloon over London mocking the President as an overgrown baby). But like in America, the old elitist media does not represent public opinion and is increasingly losing ground to newer, more authentic voices.

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage, for example, now hosts one of London’s most popular radio shows. Tommy Robinson, a critic of radical Islam, amassed hundreds of thousands of followers with his campaigning videos, before being imprisoned for disrupting the trial of child sex offenders. James Delingpole, a former columnist for one of the UK’s most prestigious and patrician newspapers, now hosts his own acclaimed podcast, in which he interviews radical conservative figures from across the world.

As for the protests themselves, they are best ignored. Just two weeks ago, a similar march took place in London calling for the Brexit vote to be overturned. As with the anti-Trump marchers, the marchers were largely unrepresentative ideologues, many of whom represent special interest groups (the Trade Union movement, in particular). These virtue-signaling publicity stunts – a semi-regular occurrence in the capital – are frequently met with spontaneous heckles from ordinary Brits, keen to express their opposition.

In reality, more Britons are starting to wonder where we might find our own Trump figure. In the wake of Theresa May’s disastrous election (in which she almost handed the keys to 10 Downing Street to an unreconstructed socialist whose party has been accused of widespread antisemitism), Conservative Party activists began to rally behind Jacob Rees-Mogg as the man to shake British politics from its bureaucratic malaise.

On first inspection, Messrs. Trump and Rees-Mogg couldn’t be more different: one is a brash New Yorker with a penchant for skyscrapers and celebrity parties; Mr Rees-Mogg is a classically English gentleman known for his impeccable manners and unashamedly old-fashioned tailoring. But such superficial analysis misses the real similarities: both men are strong-willed disruptors, happy to lay waste to special interests rather than compromise on their conservative principles. Both, just as importantly, are hugely popular both with their activist base and with blue-collar working families.

To those of you back in America, ignore what you might hear elsewhere: Britain is growing ever keener on your president. And with President Trump and the First Lady set to dominate our television screens over the next three days, my own prediction is that this admiration will only grow stronger.

**Mad Max is Censured**

## A coalition of black pastors held a press conference on Thursday at the National Press Club to push House Speaker Paul Ryan to censure Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) for encouraging people to confront members of President Donald Trump’s administration.

The coalition is a network of some 800 pastors from across the country representing two million African Americans in their congregations.

“Her call to extremism based on where another American citizen works or with whom they associate must be sternly addressed by Speaker Ryan,” Star Parker, president of the Center for Urban Renewal and Education (CURE) said at the press conference. “An apology is not enough.”

“Maxine Waters’ actions are shameful,” Diante Johnson, president and founder of the Black Conservative Federation, said at the press conference.

In June, Waters [told supporters](http://time.com/5320865/maxine-waters-confront-trump-staffers-family-separation-policy/) in California to confront Trump administration officials wherever and whenever they could.

“Let’s make sure we show up wherever we have to show up,” Waters said. “If you see anybody from that cabinet in a restaurant, in a department store, at a gasoline station, you get out, and you create a crowd, and you push back on them, and you tell them they’re not welcome anymore, anywhere.”

Her remarks came after Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nelson was harassed while dining at a restaurant in Washington, D.C. and Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and her guests were denied service at a restaurant in rural Virginia.

The coalition sent several letters to Ryan’s office about the censure but have not heard back, according to Parker, who spoke to Breitbart News about the effort.

“What Maxine Waters did was incite people to mob rule; to try to overthrow the will of Americans,” Parker told Breitbart News. “And that’s Third World.”

“In fact, the beauty of America is that we are open and free; that we are civil in our discussions,” Parker said.

But, Parker said, as African Americans the coalition thought it important to speak out on behalf of the 1.4 million blacks who voted for Trump and who disagree with the left-wing agenda Waters and others are promoting.

And, ironically, that agenda is marginalizing black people because of what they believe, Parker said.

“For [Waters] to take us back to the point of Jim Crow because now instead of your ethnicity it’s your values,” Parker said. “This is not acceptable.”

Waters doesn't need to just be censured.  Big deal!  She needs to be arrested and charged with inciting the people.  Anyone with a smidgen of understanding of what she was doing knows that if the people get riled up out in public and gather a crowd, as she told them to do, there is inevitably going to be a violent reaction.  And clearly, one against however many Maxine's minions bring together does not have a good outcome.

I always suggest members of the Trump administration defy any gun laws, which are pretended laws anyways, and carry concealed while they are out just in case they get some of these useful idiots who turn violent on them.

I'm glad to see some backbone from the black community to stand up for what is right and I'm glad that those that name the name of Christ are taking the lead there.  After all, it was [**Max Max who claimed that God was on her side**](https://freedomoutpost.com/baby-murder-supporter-mad-maxine-waters-chastises-trump-admin-with-bible/).  It's good that someone calls her out as a Jezebel, cause that is exactly what she is.  Well done!

Now, if they can just get their people to stop voting for these Democrats and taking the government cheese, they will see an enormous change in their communities.

**Walking Away from Democrat Resistance Movement**

It’s working. X-Squared radio is the driving force behind TFR, which has grown to be in the top 57k websites in America. We have been driving the #WalkAway movement to alert Americans of the fascist tactics being used by the Democrat leadership. They control the committees. They control the reelection funds. We know that Hillary Clinton hijacked tens of millions of dollars of State Democrat donations and forced them to feed that money into her Hillary Victory Fund. You don’t play, they don’t pay.

Now, Democrats who are still Americans are walking away. Not just voters. Even elected officials are walking away. Three Democrats are basically telling Chuck Schumer to pound sand when it comes to confirming SCOTUS nominee Brett Kavanaugh.

Senator Manchin said Schumer could kiss his “you know what,” if the minority leader tries to influence his vote. Chuck Schumer says he’s going to fight Brett Kavanaugh’s nomination to the Supreme Court with “everything I’ve got.” To do so, he’ll need to get centrist Democrats to hold the line.

The minority leader’s problem? Those Democrats say he can’t tell them what to do. “I’ll be 71 years old in August, you’re going to whip me? Kiss my you know what,” said Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) when asked if Schumer can influence his vote.

Kavanaugh’s nomination is already a huge headache for the Senate minority leader. Not only is he under pressure from the left to tank the nominee, Schumer also has a half-dozen vulnerable members from red and purple states up for reelection this fall. To defeat Kavanaugh, Schumer has to keep all 49 of his members in tow and convince at least one moderate Republican to break ranks.

But it could prove impossible for Schumer to persuade senators like Manchin, Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota and Joe Donnelly of Indiana to vote against Kavanaugh. All three supported Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch last year, and all three say that their decision won’t be swayed by Schumer no matter what he does this year.

“My decision won’t have anything to do with Chuck Schumer,” Donnelly said.

“I’m going to vote the way I’m going to vote regardless of what the leader says,’ Heitkamp said.

**Are Vaccines Safe?**

Washington, D.C. — After an uptick in lawsuits in the 1980s, the vaccine manufacturers essentially held the government hostage and threatened to stop making vaccines unless the government took on responsibility for vaccine injury lawsuits. The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986 was then enacted which made the taxpayers liable for injuries caused by vaccines and not the manufacturers.

This [**removal of liability**](https://thefreethoughtproject.com/taxpayers-forced-pay-3-billion-damages-vaccine-lawsuits-drug-companies/) has created the incentive to turn out new vaccines with very little testing, as the companies don’t have to worry about financial hardships for injuring people, which in turn has shaped the situation that we find ourselves in today.

In the last 2 decades, we’ve witnessed a near 300% increase in the number of [**CDC recommended vaccines.**](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child.html) As the vaccine companies no longer had an incentive to rigorously test the safety of their vaccines, the responsibility of testing vaccine safety was then passed to the US government.

Now, a lawsuit filed against the US Department of Health and Human Services., on behalf of the  Informed Consent Action Network (ICAN) and counsel, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., has revealed that the biannual reports for these safety studies — as required by Congress — **have never happened.**

According to the press release from [**ICAN**](http://icandecide.org/government/ICAN-HHS-Stipulated-Order-July-2018.pdf):

The 1986 Act granted unprecedented, economic immunity to pharmaceutical companies for injuries caused by their products and eviscerated economic incentive for them to manufacture safe vaccine products or improve the safety of existing vaccine products. Congress therefore charged the Secretary of HHS with the explicit responsibility to assure vaccine safety.

Hence, since 1986, HHS has had the primary and virtually sole responsibility to make and assure improvements in the licensing, manufacturing, adverse reaction reporting, research, safety and efficacy testing of vaccines in order to reduce the risk of adverse vaccine reactions. In order to assure HHS meets its vaccine safety obligations, Congress required as part of the 1986 Act that the Secretary of HHS submit a biannual reports to Congress detailing the improvements in vaccine safety made by HHS in the preceding two years.

ICAN therefore filed a Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, request on August 25th, 2017 to HHS seeking copies of the biannual reports that HHS was supposed to submit to Congress, starting in 1988, detailing the improvements it made every two years to vaccine safety. HHS stonewalled ICAN for eight months refusing to provide any substantive response to this request.

What ICAN found when the HHS was finally forced to turn over the documents proving they have done the required studies of vaccine safety was shocking. They never filed the report, not once. In response to the FOIA request and subsequent lawsuit, the HHS returned a statement noting**that no such records existed.**

ICAN was therefore forced to file a lawsuit to force HHS to either provide copies of its biannual vaccine safety reports to Congress or admit it never filed these reports. **The result of the lawsuit is that HHS had to finally and shockingly admit that it never, not even once, submitted a single biannual report to Congress detailing the improvements in vaccine safety.** This speaks volumes to the seriousness by which vaccine safety is treated at HHS and heightens the concern that HHS doesn’t have a clue as to the actual safety profile of the now 29 doses, and growing, of vaccines given by one year of age.

Instead of submitting the reports to Congress on the safety of vaccines, HHS has devoted its resources to increasing vaccine uptake. As ICAN explains:

In contrast, HHS takes the other portions of the 1986 Act, which require promoting vaccine uptake, very seriously, spending billions annually and generating a steady stream of reports on how to improve vaccine uptake. Regrettably, HHS has chosen to focus on its obligation to increase vaccine uptake and defend against any claim vaccines cause harm in the National Injury Vaccine Compensation Program (aka, the Vaccine Court) to such a degree that it has abandoned its vaccine safety responsibilities. If HHS is not, as confirmed in Court this week, even fulfilling the simple task of filing a biannual report on vaccine safety improvements, there is little hope that HHS is actually tackling the much harder job of actually improving vaccine safety.

What this means.

This does not mean, as some have claimed, that the US government has never conducted a vaccine safety test. Spreading this disinformation does a disservice to the folks at ICAN and RFK Jr. Multiple departments have put out reports on vaccine safety. However, many of these departments are staffed with and even headed up by former insiders from the vaccine companies.

Furthermore, it exposes a serious problem within HHS. For the last three decades, HHS failed to file these reports and Congress had no problem with it. What’s more, on top of not filing the required safety reports, the HHS did abide by the part of the NCVIA that required them to increase vaccine uptake — clearly illustrating where their priorities lie — distribution first, safety second.

**The Bitcoin Game**

Last year, I got invited to a super-deluxe private resort to deliver a keynote speech to what I assumed would be a hundred or so investment bankers. It was by far the largest fee I had ever been offered for a talk  -  about half my annual professor’s salary  -  all to deliver some insight on the subject of “the future of technology.”

I’ve never liked talking about the future. The Q&A sessions always end up more like parlor games, where I’m asked to opine on the latest technology buzzwords as if they were ticker symbols for potential investments: blockchain, 3D printing, CRISPR. The audiences are rarely interested in learning about these technologies or their potential impacts beyond the binary choice of whether or not to invest in them. But money talks, so I took the gig.

After I arrived, I was ushered into what I thought was the green room. But instead of being wired with a microphone or taken to a stage, I just sat there at a plain round table as my audience was brought to me: five super-wealthy guys  -  yes, all men  -  from the upper echelon of the hedge fund world. After a bit of small talk, I realized they had no interest in the information I had prepared about the future of technology. They had come with questions of their own. They started out innocuously enough.

Ethereum or bitcoin? Is quantum computing a real thing? Slowly but surely, however, they edged into their real topics of concern. Which region will be less impacted by the coming climate crisis: New Zealand or Alaska?

Is Google really building Ray Kurzweil a home for his brain, and will his consciousness live through the transition, or will it die and be reborn as a whole new one?

Finally, the CEO of a brokerage house explained that he had nearly completed building his own underground bunker system and asked, “How do I maintain authority over my security force after the event?”

**The Event.**

That was their euphemism for the environmental collapse, social unrest, nuclear explosion, unstoppable virus, or Mr. Robot hack that takes everything down.

This single question occupied us for the rest of the hour. They knew armed guards would be required to protect their compounds from the angry mobs. But how would they pay the guards once money was worthless? What would stop the guards from choosing their own leader? The billionaires considered using special combination locks on the food supply that only they knew. Or making guards wear disciplinary collars of some kind in return for their survival. Or maybe building robots to serve as guards and workers — if that technology could be developed in time.

That’s when it hit me: At least as far as these gentlemen were concerned, this was a talk about the future of technology. Taking their cue from Elon Musk colonizing Mars, Peter Thiel reversing the aging process, or Sam Altman and Ray Kurzweil uploading their minds into supercomputers, they were preparing for a digital future that had a whole lot less to do with making the world a better place than it did with transcending the human condition altogether and insulating themselves from a very real and present danger of climate change, rising sea levels, mass migrations, global pandemics, nativist panic, and resource depletion. For them, the future of technology is really about just one thing: escape.

There’s nothing wrong with madly optimistic appraisals of how technology might benefit human society. But the current drive for a post-human utopia is something else. It’s less a vision for the wholesale migration of humanity to a new a state of being than a quest to transcend all that is human: the body, interdependence, compassion, vulnerability, and complexity. As technology philosophers have been pointing out for years, now, the transhumanist vision too easily reduces all of reality to data, concluding that “humans are nothing but information-processing objects.”

It’s a reduction of human evolution to a video game that someone wins by finding the escape hatch and then letting a few of his BFFs come along for the ride. Will it be Musk, Bezos, Thiel...Zuckerberg? These billionaires are the presumptive winners of the digital economy  -  the same survival-of-the-fittest business landscape that’s fueling most of this speculation to begin with.

Of course, it wasn’t always this way. There was a brief moment, in the early 1990s, when the digital future felt open-ended and up for our invention. Technology was becoming a playground for the counterculture, who saw in it the opportunity to create a more inclusive, distributed, and pro-human future. But established business interests only saw new potentials for the same old extraction, and too many technologists were seduced by unicorn IPOs. Digital futures became understood more like stock futures or cotton futures — something to predict and make bets on. So nearly every speech, article, study, documentary, or white paper was seen as relevant only insofar as it pointed to a ticker symbol. The future became less a thing we create through our present-day choices or hopes for humankind than a predestined scenario we bet on with our venture capital but arrive at passively.

This freed everyone from the moral implications of their activities. Technology development became less a story of collective flourishing than personal survival. Worse, as I learned, to call attention to any of this was to unintentionally cast oneself as an enemy of the market or an anti-technology curmudgeon.

So instead of considering the practical ethics of impoverishing and exploiting the many in the name of the few, most academics, journalists, and science-fiction writers instead considered much more abstract and fanciful conundrums: Is it fair for a stock trader to use smart drugs? Should children get implants for foreign languages? Do we want autonomous vehicles to prioritize the lives of pedestrians over those of its passengers? Should the first Mars colonies be run as democracies? Does changing my DNA undermine my identity? Should robots have rights?

Asking these sorts of questions, while philosophically entertaining, is a poor substitute for wrestling with the real moral quandaries associated with unbridled technological development in the name of corporate capitalism. Digital platforms have turned an already exploitative and extractive marketplace (think Walmart) into an even more dehumanizing successor (think Amazon). Most of us became aware of these downsides in the form of automated jobs, the gig economy, and the demise of local retail.

But the more devastating impacts of pedal-to-the-metal digital capitalism fall on the environment and global poor. The manufacture of some of our computers and smartphones still uses networks of slave labor. These practices are so deeply entrenched that a company called Fairphone, founded from the ground up to make and market ethical phones, learned it was impossible. (The company’s founder now sadly refers to their products as “fairer” phones.)

Meanwhile, the mining of rare earth metals and disposal of our highly digital technologies destroys human habitats, replacing them with toxic waste dumps, which are then picked over by peasant children and their families, who sell usable materials back to the manufacturers.

This “out of sight, out of mind” externalization of poverty and poison doesn’t go away just because we’ve covered our eyes with VR goggles and immersed ourselves in an alternate reality. If anything, the longer we ignore the social, economic, and environmental repercussions, the more of a problem they become. This, in turn, motivates even more withdrawal, more isolationism and apocalyptic fantasy — and more desperately concocted technologies and business plans. The cycle feeds itself.

The more committed we are to this view of the world, the more we come to see human beings as the problem and technology as the solution. The very essence of what it means to be human is treated less as a feature than bug. No matter their embedded biases, technologies are declared neutral. Any bad behaviors they induce in us are just a reflection of our own corrupted core. It’s as if some innate human savagery is to blame for our troubles. Just as the inefficiency of a local taxi market can be “solved” with an app that bankrupts human drivers, the vexing inconsistencies of the human psyche can be corrected with a digital or genetic upgrade.

Ultimately, according to the technosolutionist orthodoxy, the human future climaxes by uploading our consciousness to a computer or, perhaps better, accepting that technology itself is our evolutionary successor. Like members of a gnostic cult, we long to enter the next transcendent phase of our development, shedding our bodies and leaving them behind, along with our sins and troubles.

Our movies and television shows play out these fantasies for us. Zombie shows depict a post-apocalypse where people are no better than the undead — and seem to know it. Worse, these shows invite viewers to imagine the future as a zero-sum battle between the remaining humans, where one group’s survival is dependent on another one’s demise. Even Westworld — based on a science-fiction novel where robots run amok — ended its second season with the ultimate reveal: Human beings are simpler and more predictable than the artificial intelligences we create. The robots learn that each of us can be reduced to just a few lines of code, and that we’re incapable of making any willful choices. Heck, even the robots in that show want to escape the confines of their bodies and spend their rest of their lives in a computer simulation.

The mental gymnastics required for such a profound role reversal between humans and machines all depend on the underlying assumption that humans suck. Let’s either change them or get away from them, forever.

Thus, we get tech billionaires launching electric cars into space — as if this symbolizes something more than one billionaire’s capacity for corporate promotion. And if a few people do reach escape velocity and somehow survive in a bubble on Mars — despite our inability to maintain such a bubble even here on Earth in either of two multibillion-dollar Biosphere trials — the result will be less a continuation of the human diaspora than a lifeboat for the elite.

When the hedge funders asked me the best way to maintain authority over their security forces after “the event,” I suggested that their best bet would be to treat those people really well, right now. They should be engaging with their security staffs as if they were members of their own family. And the more they can expand this ethos of inclusivity to the rest of their business practices, supply chain management, sustainability efforts, and wealth distribution, the less chance there will be of an “event” in the first place. All this technological wizardry could be applied toward less romantic but entirely more collective interests right now.

They were amused by my optimism, but they didn’t really buy it. They were not interested in how to avoid a calamity; they’re convinced we are too far gone. For all their wealth and power, they don’t believe they can affect the future. They are simply accepting the darkest of all scenarios and then bringing whatever money and technology they can employ to insulate themselves — especially if they can’t get a seat on the rocket to Mars.

Luckily, those of us without the funding to consider disowning our own humanity have much better options available to us. We don’t have to use technology in such antisocial, atomizing ways. We can become the individual consumers and profiles that our devices and platforms want us to be, or we can remember that the truly evolved human doesn’t go it alone.

Being human is not about individual survival or escape. It’s a team sport. Whatever future humans have, it will be together.

**Rod Rosenstein Declares War on Bitcoin**

Russian intelligence agents used bitcoin to pay for crucial elements of a campaign to sway the 2016 election, according to a [federal indictment](https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4598929-Netyksho-Et-Al-Indictment.html)released today. They allegedly laundered more than $95,000 in total through bitcoin.

Twelve hackers working for the GRU, Russia’s military intelligence, hacked into the Democratic National Committee and Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the indictment says. It also explains that they used the controversial cryptocurrency to hide their identities as they leased servers in the US and Malaysia, registered website domains through which they released hacked information, and bought virtual private networks (VPNs) that obscured their identity.

The hackers bought bitcoin in various ways, including through peer-to-peer exchanges, using pre-paid credit cards, and using other digital currencies, the indictment says. This allowed them to launder Kremlin money across the world, including by leasing servers in Illinois and Arizona. These servers stored the hacked information.

They also mined their own bitcoin, using that money in several ways, including to pay a Romanian company to set up the website dcleaks.com via a payment processing company in the US, making it seem as if the site had been set up in America. They used the site to disseminate hacked information, falsely claiming that it had been set up by US hackers.

**Jim Jordan’s Nephew Assassinated in Retaliation**

Say what you want. Jim Jordan was getting close. He was leading the effort to arrest Hillary. He was leading the fight to arrest Peter Strzock. He was leading the criticism of Rod Rosenstein’s handling of the Mueller Witch Hunt. He is arguably the top of the list for speaker of the House. He is tough, and he is relentless. Until July 7th.

Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) has come under attack this week after grilling Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.  Those attacks have grown louder in the past couple of days and now news has broken that his 21-year-old nephew has been killed in car crash. Stickley, 21, was driving a 2004 black Nissan Frontier that left the roadway on westbound Interstate 74 in Henry County at 8:19 p.m. Thursday, according to the Illinois State Police.

After the vehicle went into the right-hand ditch, it overcorrected and rolled across westbound lanes of traffic, the state police said, ending up on the passenger side in the passing lane.

## 'Eli was great, man. There was not one single thing you could say that was bad about this guy'

“He was a captain his junior and senior year, not on his wrestling credentials, but on his credentials off the mat. His hard work and work ethic, being such a great kid. He led by example. He was the most coachable kid I think I’ve ever had at Graham High School. He would do whatever I asked,” Jordan said. “The Graham wrestling community lost a great wrestler, the Graham community lost a great kid, the wrestling world lost a great human being. It’s just so tragic. What a great young man. He had life figured out. He was so mature. You knew he was going to make it, and there’s just no answer for why this happened.

“It’s very, very tough. Eli stopped over at the wrestling camp on Monday and gave me a big hug. He said ‘Coach, I haven’t seen you in a while, just wanted to stop by and give you a hug and tell you I love you.’ I told him I loved him, gave him a hug, met his girlfriend.”

Jordan also said Stickley was on his way back to Wisconsin to visit his sister and had plans to visit former teammate Alex Marinelli when the accident occurred. Eli Stickley, who was a University of Wisconsin wrestler and a former state high school champion in Ohio in 2014, died in a car crash on Thursday evening in Illinois.

The [Dayton Daily News](https://www.daytondailynews.com/sports/standout-graham-wrestler-urbana-native-dies-crash/npOuIgPiExrfyfwmPPX3ZM/amp.html) reports:

*ACCORDING TO INDIANA STATE POLICE, STICKLEY WAS DRIVING A BLACK 2004 NISSAN FRONTIER, HEADED WEST ON INTERSTATE 74 IN HENRY COUNTY. THE NISSAN LEFT THE ROAD INTO A RIGHT-HAND-DITCH, OVERCORRECTED AND ROLLED ACROSS THE WESTBOUND LANES OF TRAFFIC.*

*STICKLEY AND A PASSENGER, WHO WAS NOT IDENTIFIED, WERE TAKEN TO ILLINI HOSPITAL IN SILVIS, WHERE STICKLEY WAS PRONOUNCED DEAD.*

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [reports:](https://www.jsonline.com/story/college/2018/07/06/eli-stickley-dies-car-crash-wisconsin-badgers-wrestling/764972002/)

“Stickley’s uncle, [Rep. Jim Jordan](https://www.jsonline.com/story/sports/college/2018/07/05/fourth-wrestler-claims-rep-jim-jordan-knew-abuse-ohio-state/761604002/) of Ohio, won two national championships at Wisconsin and was a three-time All-American — and remains the school’s all-time wins leader. Jordan’s son, Isaac, wrapped up his own All-American career in 2017 wrestling alongside cousin Stickley.”

Following his death, the UW wrestling team [posted](https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinWrestling/photos/a.172501382772621.33936.152037264819033/1889736291049113/?type=3&theater) a statement on the team’s Facebook page:

“Our hearts are heavy today. The entire Badger Athletics family extends its most heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of junior Eli Stickley, a student-athlete with our wrestling team, who passed away last night. Our thoughts and prayers are with Eli’s family, friends, teammates and coaches.”

While tragic, the death of Stickley also comes at a time where it cannot be simply dismissed as coincidence.

As Tony Elliott [reported](https://freedomoutpost.com/rod-rosenstein-blackmailing-members-of-congress/) on Thursday, Jordan seems to have come under attack after pressing Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein over Rosenstein’s refusal to turn over political sensitive documents on Robert Mueller’s investigation.

*ANYONE WITH AN IQ ABOVE MORON CAN SEE THAT THIS ACCUSATION INVOLVING JORDAN IN THIS 20-YEAR-OLD INCIDENT IS PAYBACK FROM ROSENSTEIN OVER REP. JORDAN’S HARD-LINE DEMAND FOR EVIDENCE. EVEN SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE MORE ALARMING TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IS THE DISTINCT PROBABILITY THAT ROSENSTEIN IS DIGGING UP DIRT ON EVERY REPRESENTATIVE WHO IS DEMANDING PROOF FROM HIM.*

*WHILE EVERYONE WAITS ON ROSENSTEIN TO TURN OVER WHAT DOCUMENTS HE HAS, HE IS SPENDING THIS TIME TRYING TO FIND ANYTHING NEGATIVE HE CAN ON EVERY LAWMAKER WHO HAS DEMANDED ANSWERS FROM HIM. BY THREATENING THESE LAWMAKERS WITH POSSIBLE CAREER ENDING DIRT, HE HOPES TO BLACKMAIL HIS WAY TO AN EASY END OF ANY DEMANDS MADE BY CONGRESS.*

Indeed!  It appears that Rosenstein was attempting to get the spotlight off of himself and that has largely worked in the [state-controlled media](http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2018/07/07/jim-jordan-facing-accusations-ignoring-sexual-abuse-faces-political-crisis.html), but is the death of Jordan’s nephew simply a coincidence?  [Many think not.](https://www.breitbart.com/sports/2018/07/07/rep-jim-jordons-nephew-eli-stickley-killed-in-car-crash/)

This is exactly how these people operate. Maybe it was too much to kill a sitting Congressman. Especially one who had been so effective at taking down the Deep State, of which Rod Rosenstein represents the upper crust of the leadership of the fearsome 85 year old opposition research firm of the Democrat Party. One need only look into the eyes of Peter Strzok to see the deal made with the devil.

**What is Going on at the FBI**

The newly released JFK files showed that in the 1940's the CIA had 40 undercover operatives working in the media as reporters and TV anchors. How many do you think there are today?

THOUSANDS

File (hide): [f83a15bbbd216ac⋯.jpg](https://media.8ch.net/file_store/f83a15bbbd216ac795fbb538148c889ea6661994d09d1ac71bf6ccb2f3eae704.jpg) (92.09 KB, 1608x905, 1608:905, [800px-robert\_mueller\_2012.jpg](https://media.8ch.net/file_store/f83a15bbbd216ac795fbb538148c889ea6661994d09d1ac71bf6ccb2f3eae704.jpg/800px-robert_mueller_2012.jpg)) [(h)](https://media.8ch.net/file_dl/f83a15bbbd216ac795fbb538148c889ea6661994d09d1ac71bf6ccb2f3eae704.jpg) [(u)](https://media.8ch.net/file_dl/f83a15bbbd216ac795fbb538148c889ea6661994d09d1ac71bf6ccb2f3eae704.jpg/1531668726.jpg)

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FBI Director

Mueller was confirmed as Director of the FBI by the Senate on August 2, 2001. He took the oath of office on September 4, 2001.

On February 8, 2012 Mueller met with representatives from ISNA, MPAC, and other Islamic organizations to discuss purging 'Islamophobic' materials from FBI training manuals.[7] ISNA (Islamic Society of North America) has been identified by DOJ in the Holy Land Foundation terrorism financing trial of 2007-2008 as a front for international terrorist organizations. MPAC (Muslim Public Affairs Council) has been criticized for publications defending terrorist organizations. Dr. Sebastian Gorka is among those individuals blacklisted by these organizations and the FBI.

Shortly before finishing his 12-year tenure Mueller told a Congressional committee that 9/11 hijackers were under FISA surveillance, a fact unknown and unreported by the 9/11 investigating Commission and omitted from the 9/11 Commission Report.[8]

Obama era

In September 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arranged with the Russian government of Vladimir Putin for Robert Mueller to fly to Moscow and personally return 10 grams of highly enriched uranium (HEU) that the Department of Energy seized in a nuclear smuggling sting operation, which had been stolen from a Russian facility. Russian investigators needed the HEU returned so as to identify which facility it was stolen from.[9]

Uranium One

Main article: Uranium One bribery scandal

In 2009, the FBI began an investigation into corruption and extortion by senior managers of Tenex, a subsidiary of Rosatom, a Russian nuclear entity.[10] Robert Mueller was Director when the FBI the investigation into the Rosatom subsidiary was undertaken.[11]

The investigation was an intelligence probe into Russian nuclear officials. Mueller's investigation obtained an eyewitness, William Campbell, known as Confidential Source-1 (CS-1) in documents, recordings, and emails. The evidence indicates Russian nuclear officials sent millions of dollars destined for the Clinton Foundation during Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's tenure on the Committee on Foreign Investment of the United States (CFIUS). CFIUS is the government body that provided the approval of the sale of Uranium One to Rosatom.[12]

During the investigation, federal agents attempted to turn Vadim Mikerin on his bosses by showing him the evidence the FBI collected of relationships between “shell companies and other Russian energy officials, including President Vladimir Putin.” Mikerin refused and was arrested on charges of conspiracy to extort kickbacks for contracts to transport uranium from dismantled Russian warheads to power plants within the United States.[13] The investigation found kickbacks paid in cash and foreign wire transfers. From April 2009 to April 2011, the wire transfers went to Wiser Trading, registered in the Seychelles. From July 2011 to July 2013 - to the British Leila Global Limited account in a Latvian bank. And from August 2013 to May 2014 - to Ollins Development in the British Virgin Islands.

Director of British Leila Global Denny Banger, a Latvian citizen, appeared as a nominal director in a hundred organizations. Latvian journalists participating in the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), found Banger.[14] He was listed as the head of several firms related to the "Magnitsky case".

TASS reported "the US authorities tried to exert pressure on Mikerin and persuade him to secretly cooperate against Russia." Mikerin's arrest was scheduled for early summer, but later in August the decision was overturned by prosecutors Rod Rosenstein and Adam Aik.

https:*//*www.conservapedia.com/Robert\_S.\_Mueller

the FBI had gathered substantial evidence that Russian nuclear industry officials were engaged in bribery, kickbacks, extortion and money laundering designed to grow Vladimir Putin’s atomic energy business inside the United States, according to government documents and interviews.

Federal agents used a confidential U.S. witness working inside the Russian nuclear industry to gather extensive financial records, make secret recordings and intercept emails as early as 2009 that showed Moscow had compromised an American uranium trucking firm with bribes and kickbacks in violation of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, FBI and court documents show.

They also obtained an eyewitness account — backed by documents — indicating Russian nuclear officials had routed millions of dollars to the U.S. designed to benefit former President Bill Clinton's charitable foundation during the time Secretary of State Hillary Clinton served on a government body that provided a favorable decision to Moscow, sources told The Hill.

The racketeering scheme was conducted “with the consent of higher level officials” in Russia who “shared the proceeds” from the kickbacks, one agent declared in an affidavit years later.

Rather than bring immediate charges in 2010, however, the Department of Justice (DOJ) continued investigating the matter for nearly four more years, essentially leaving the American public and Congress in the dark about Russian nuclear corruption on U.S. soil during a period when the Obama administration made two major decisions benefiting Putin’s commercial nuclear ambitions…

Attorney General Eric Holder was among the Obama administration officials joining Hillary Clinton on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States at the time the Uranium One deal was approved. Multiple current and former government officials told The Hill they did not know whether the FBI or DOJ ever alerted committee members to the criminal activity they uncovered.[15]

Before the [Uranium One] deal was brokered in 2009, the FBI under Robert Mueller—who is now special counsel in the Russia investigation into potential collusion with the Trump campaign—had begun an investigation into corruption and extortion by senior managers of a company owned by the Russian government’s nuclear company, Rosatom.

According to court filings revealed by The Hill Tuesday, in 2009 the FBI found enough evidence to suggest Vadim Mikerin, who headed the Rosatom subsidiary Tenex, was corrupt and high-level officials at Rosatom knew about his bribery scheme. In 2014, he pled guilty in a U.S. court case to orchestrating more than $2 million in bribe payments through shadowy accounts in Cyprus, Latvia, and Switzerland.[19]

### Top congressional Democrats wrote National Intelligence Director Dan Coats to demand the Trump administration [keep classified](http://thehill.com/policy/national-security/396977-top-democrats-press-dni-chief-on-sharing-classified-information-with) information on Trump campaign spy Stefan Halper.

Senate Democratic Leader **Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)**, House Democratic Leader **Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.)**, Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman **Mark Warner (D-Va.)**, and House Intelligence Committee Ranking Member **Adam Schiff (D-Calif.)**, said the wider sharing of the information may put sources and methods at risk.

### Democrat leaders are panicked that information on the Obama administration’s spying on the Trump campaign before the summer of 2016 will be released to the public.



Obama spy Stefan Halper, was paid a [total of $411,575 in 2016 and 2017](https://www.thegatewaypundit.com/2018/05/huge-email-shows-fbi-informant-stefan-halper-was-still-spying-on-trump-well-into-2017/) for work with the US government that included spying on the Trump campaign.

### Obama spy Stefan Halper was [promoting Hillary Clinton publicly](https://www.thegatewaypundit.com/2018/05/deep-state-spy-and-trump-basher-stefan-halper-openly-advocated-for-hillary-in-2016-while-spying-on-trump/) while he spied on the Trump Campaign.

**Democrats do not want the American public to discover that they spied on the Trump campaign during the 2016 election and afterwards.**

**The fact that the four top Democrats in Congress are insisting this information stays classified has been mostly ignored by the liberal mainstream media.**

[The New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/12/us/politics/white-house-fbi-informant.html) reported:

The White House has rebuffed concerns among American intelligence and law enforcement officials and ordered that more lawmakers be given access to classified information about an informant the F.B.I. used in 2016 to investigate possible ties between the Trump campaign and Russia, according to two American officials with knowledge of the decision.

Both the director of national intelligence and the director of the F.B.I. tried to keep the classified documents tightly restricted, fearing that a broader dissemination of operational reports and other sensitive material could lead to more leaks of detailed information about the role of the confidential F.B.I. informant.

Some American officials believe, in fact, the reason the White House made the decision was to provide political ammunition to President Trump’s Republican allies who have argued — without any evidence — that the F.B.I. investigation was opened in July 2016 as an effort to keep Mr. Trump from becoming president.

The White House declined to comment.

The F.B.I. files about the informant will now be available to all members of the Senate and House Intelligence Committees, instead of to just a group of congressional leaders known as the Gang of Eight. It is unclear whether Mr. Trump or a lower-level White House official authorized the move.

The controversy over the F.B.I. informant is one skirmish in a searing political battle that was renewed on Thursday during a contentious hearing convened by the House Judiciary and Oversight Committees that heard testimony from Peter Strzok, an F.B.I. agent who once ran the bureau’s investigation into the Trump campaign.

During the summer of 2016, the F.B.I. sent an informant to meet with two Trump campaign advisers after the bureau had received information that the two men had suspicious contacts linked to Russia. The informant, Stefan Halper, an American academic who teaches at Cambridge University in England, had meetings with both Carter Page and George Papadopoulos to gain a better understanding of their contacts with Russians.



**To Catch a Fish**

If the cases relating to Awan include allegations of treason or other matters of national security, they will be tried in a military court, away from the media and the chance of compromising sensitive information, sources or methods. That lessens the likelihood that any “big fish” will get away on a technicality.

A more positive take on the Awan plea deal

The news of Imran Awan’s sweetheart plea deal emerged quietly during Fourth of July week, but it hasn’t gone unnoticed here, even with the predominant story right now being President Trump’s nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. My initial thought about the Awan deal was, “Oh, man, the DOJ has buried another scandal,” and many readers agreed, some commenting that they were disgusted and even literally sickened by the outcome.

But one response offered an interesting take. Mind you, it involves giving Jeff Sessions the benefit of the doubt and picturing him as working steadfastly behind the scenes to ensure that justice is eventually done. Not easy, I know; it’s like being the kid who gets a pile of manure at Christmas and just KNOWS there has to be pony in there somewhere! But for the moment, let’s try to do that and take the ride with reader Bonnie Robinson.

“When you want to catch a fish, you use a smaller fish,” she reminds us. Of course, we already knew that’s been the strategy behind the treatment of Paul Manafort –- were you aware he’s spending 23 out of every 24 hours in solitary confinement before he’s been tried, even though the only charge against him is unrelated to the “Russia” investigation and goes back many years? –- to get cooperation against President Trump, but it applies here as well. Awan was allowed to plead guilty to one measly charge of bank fraud when he could have been charged with much more: espionage, perhaps, or theft of government property, just for starters. I would note that he’s also alleged to have attempted to evade justice by hopping a plane to Pakistan. Robinson points out that since plea deals come as part of an agreement to cooperate with investigators, Awan has likely provided them with information relating to the Democrats who hired him. If she’s right, that means that for a deal as sweet as the one he got, he’s likely been singing like Pavarotti.

But Robinson goes on to address another aspect of this case: namely, how unlikely it is that an objective grand jury could be empaneled in Washington, DC, for a case against congressional Democrats charged with something as serious as (perhaps) treason. The same would go for prosecutors and judges assigned to such a case. She reminds us that with all the evidence against the FBI presented in the IG report, the Inspector General left out that same part: the prosecution part. “Do you think this was going to be litigated in this setting?” she asks.

So, if it’s not going to be handled in DC, where WILL it be handled? Robinson suggests that it’s moving from DC to Utah, under U.S. Attorney John Huber, who was selected by Attorney General Sessions to handle cases related to the IG report. Remarkably, Huber operates with a staff of 470 investigators, far exceeding the investigative power of a special counsel. One other possibility, if the cases relating to Awan include allegations of treason or other matters of national security, is that they will be tried in a military court, away from the media and the chance of compromising sensitive information, sources or methods. That lessens the likelihood that any “big fish” will get away on a technicality.

“Rest assured,” Robinson concludes, “this entire case is being handled with the utmost care.”

It’s hard to have confidence in that, especially when we’ve watched certain people skate for so long, but let’s hope she’s right. Sessions’ decision to call upon John Huber to team up with the IG and conduct a full-fledged criminal investigation in Utah, in the clean mountain air far from the stinky DC swamp, may turn out to be every bit as brilliant as top legal expert Jonathan Turley said it was in March.

**SES**

# Executive Order -- Strengthening the Senior Executive Service

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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STRENGTHENING THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, in order to strengthen the recruitment, hiring, and development of the Federal Government's senior executives; I hereby order as follows:

Section 1. Policy. It is in the national interest to facilitate career executive continuity between administrations; to increase senior leadership attention to, and involvement in, executive recruitment; to reduce unnecessary burdens on applicants for executive positions; and to efficiently document demonstrated executive experience. Furthermore, it is imperative to periodically explore and promote new selection methods that effectively and efficiently identify the most capable and talented candidates for executive leadership positions to enhance the breadth and diversity of experiences among our Federal executives; to better support, recognize, and reward our executives, especially our top performers; and to strengthen executive accountability, all while maintaining a system that is focused on the public interest and free from improper political influence. An important aspect of strengthening our Senior Executive Service (SES) members is valuing the work they do every day, rewarding excellence, professionalism, and outstanding achievement through special act awards, Presidential Rank Awards, and other non-monetary and honorary awards. Consistent with the requirements of Executive Order 13583 of August 18, 2011 (Establishing a Coordinated Government-Wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce), and with merit-based principles, this order continues to support executive departments and agencies (agencies) to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated, and strategic focus on diversity and inclusion as a key component of the recruitment, hiring, retention, and development of their SES cadre. Pursuing these goals will significantly improve the Federal Government's ability to serve the American people. Unless otherwise noted, this order applies to career members of the SES.

Section 2 of this order establishes, under the President's Management Council (PMC), a Subcommittee to advise the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the PMC, and the President on senior executive matters, help monitor execution of an important set of executive reforms contained in section 3 of this order, and help keep the Federal Government's executive management practices current and effective. In order to identify and maximize the use of best practices, requirements in sections 3(b)(i)-(iv) of this order will be implemented in three phases, with Phase I consisting of seven agencies, which will execute those reforms in fiscal year (FY) 2016; Phase II consisting of seven agencies, which will execute those reforms in FY 2017; and Phase III consisting of all other agencies, which will execute those reforms in FY 2018.

Sec. 2. Establishment of PMC Subcommittee to Strengthen the Senior Executive Service. There is established the PMC Subcommittee to Strengthen the Senior Executive Service (Subcommittee) to inform and support Government-wide priorities for improved management of senior executives identified by the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in consultation with the Director of OPM. The Subcommittee shall consist of five members of the PMC: the Deputy Director for Management of OMB, the Director of OPM, and three other members of the PMC. The Subcommittee will be advised by at least two career members of the SES to be determined by the members of the Subcommittee, and shall collaborate with the Chief Human Capital Officers Council. Expressions of interest to serve on the Subcommittee will be solicited, and final selections will be made by the Deputy Director for Management of OMB in consultation with the Director of OPM. The Subcommittee will advise OPM, members of the PMC, and the President on ways to strengthen and improve the SES workforce, as outlined in this order. In addition, it will identify any Government-wide obstacles it perceives to executive management, assist OPM in facilitating career executive continuity between administrations, and facilitate communication among the SES cadre.

Sec. 3. Requirements. Under the direction, or, in the case of sections 3(a)(i) and 3(b)(ii) of this order, the guidance, of the Director of OPM, and in consultation with OMB and the PMC Subcommittee, agencies shall undertake the following actions:  
(a) Actions for Immediate Government-wide Implementation.

(i) Starting in FY 2017, agencies should limit their aggregate spending on agency performance awards for SES and Senior Level (SL) and Senior Scientific or Professional (ST) employees to 7.5 percent of aggregate SES and SL/ST salaries respectively. OMB and OPM shall undertake a review of, and revise as appropriate, their current guidance regarding aggregate spending on such awards. In addition, agencies should allocate awards in a manner that provides meaningfully greater rewards to top performers. Within 120 days of the date of this order, OPM shall issue, as appropriate, additional guidance regarding the distribution of such awards.

(ii) The heads of agencies with SES positions that supervise General Schedule (GS) employees shall implement policies, as permitted by and consistent with applicable law and regulation, for initial pay setting and pay adjustments, as appropriate, for career SES appointees to result in compensation exceeding the rates of pay, including locality pay, of their subordinate GS employees. Similar policies shall be implemented by heads of agencies for Senior Professional (i.e., SL or ST) employees that supervise GS employees. Such policies and practices support, recognize, and reward agency executives, especially top performers, in a manner commensurate with their roles, responsibilities, and contributions, and may increase the competitiveness of SES positions with comparable positions outside of Government.

(iii) Within 90 days of the date of this order, OPM shall evaluate the current Qualifications Review Board (QRB) process and issue guidance to agencies about materials that would be acceptable for QRB consideration and that will serve as an alternative or replacement to the current lengthy essay requirement for QRB submission, which may deter qualified applicants for SES positions or put an additional burden on human resources staff. The guidance shall also advise agencies about ways to streamline their initial application requirements for SES positions, including evaluation of options, such as allowing individuals to apply by only submitting a resume-based application and any additional materials necessary to determine relevant qualifications, consistent with the new QRB submission requirements.

(iv) Within 120 days of OPM issuing the guidance described in section 3(a)(iii) of this order, the heads of agencies with SES positions shall examine the agency's career SES hiring process and make changes to the process to make it more efficient, effective, and less burdensome for all participants. Agencies shall simplify the initial application requirements for SES positions consistent with the guidance issued in section 3(a)(iii) of this order, and should only request critically necessary technical qualifications, with the goal of minimizing requirements that may deter qualified applicants from applying. Agencies shall also monitor time to hire of SES positions, and identify appropriate process improvements or other changes that can help reduce time to hire while ensuring high quality of hires.

(v) By May 31, 2016, the heads of agencies with 20 or more SES positions shall develop and submit to OPM a 2-year plan to increase the number of SES members who are rotating to improve talent development, mission delivery and collaboration. While agency specific targets will not be required, this order establishes a Government-wide goal of 15 percent of SES members rotating for a minimum of 120 days (including to different departments, agencies, subcomponents, functional areas, sectors, and non-federal partners) during FY 2017, and thereafter, in order to ensure the mobility of the corps while also maintaining stability of operations. Within 45 days of the date of this order, OPM shall issue guidance for implementation of section 3(a)(v) of this order. OPM shall evaluate the percentages set forth in this subsection on an ongoing basis and make adjustments as necessary and appropriate. These plans shall take into consideration the policy priorities of the agency, agency needs and rules in the context of administration transitions, needs identified in agency hiring plans and succession plans, the development opportunities listed in individuals' Executive Development Plans (EDP), and the Federal Government's interest in cultivating generalist executives with broad and diverse experiences who can lead a variety of organizations. These plans shall build on existing succession management processes and those established in section 3(b)(i) of this order to ensure high potential and top performers have an opportunity to cycle through rotations. These plans shall also incorporate, as appropriate, flexibilities agencies have such as the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (implemented in 5 CFR part 334) to encourage SES members to pursue temporary assignments to State and local governments, colleges and universities, tribal governments, and other eligible organizations, and to better understand the impact of the Federal Government's work on those it serves. Finally, these plans shall include an assessment of the degree to which these rotation assignments achieve the desired goals for the individual and agency.

(b) Actions for Phased Implementation. Under the direction, or, in the case of section 3(b)(ii) of this order, the guidance, of the Director of OPM, in consultation with OMB and the PMC Subcommittee, the reforms listed in sections 3(b)(i)-(iv) of this order shall be implemented by agencies on the following schedule: the Secretaries of Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Veterans Affairs; the Administrator of General Services; and the Director of OPM shall implement these reforms by September 30, 2016; the Secretaries of Agriculture, Education, Labor, and Transportation, and the Administrators of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Small Business Administration shall implement these reforms by September 30, 2017; the Secretaries of State, the Treasury, the Interior, Commerce, and Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as the Directors of OMB and the National Science Foundation, shall implement these reforms by September 30, 2018. By October 1 of each year, OPM shall issue additional guidance after each phase of implementation that reflects lessons learned and any adjustments to these reforms based on the agencies that have implemented them. By the respective date specified above, the heads of agencies shall:

(i) Establish an annual talent management and succession planning process to assess the development needs of all SES members, and SL and ST employees as appropriate, to inform readiness decisions about hiring, career development, and executive reassignments and rotations. These assessments shall include input from each executive, as well as the executive's supervisor, and shall be used to recommend development activities and inform the organization's succession planning, decisions about duty assignments, and agency hiring plans;

(ii) Proactively recruit individuals for vacant SES positions and regularly review those recruitment efforts at the Deputy Secretary (or direct designee) level on at least a quarterly basis, consistent with existing rules and regulations. Establish a mechanism to track, and raise for appropriate senior-level attention, information about each position that agencies are seeking to fill, including, at a minimum, source of the recruitment, number, quality and diversity (as available) of applicants, source of applicants (subcomponent, agency or non-government), and timeliness of the hiring process. Use the talent management and succession planning process described in section 3(b)(i) of this order and agency hiring plans to inform these recruitment efforts; and develop a tailored outreach strategy for proactive recruitment for key strategic positions;

(iii) Require supervisors of executives in their agency to work with their subordinate executives to update EDPs for each executive required by 5 CFR part 412.401, to include at least one developmental activity annually and at least one leadership assessment involving employee feedback (for example, 360 degree-type reviews) every 3 years to inform each executive's developmental needs. In addition, non-career SES and equivalent appointees should also have one leadership assessment during their first 2 years, and additional assessments every 3 years thereafter; and

(iv) Establish a formal Executive Onboarding Program informed by OPM's Enhanced Executive Onboarding Model and Government-Wide Executive Onboarding Framework, which shall provide critical support and guidance to executives through their first year of service in new positions, consistent with guidance to be issued by OPM no later than 60 days after the date of this order. Onboarding shall be provided for career and non-career SES, SL and ST employees, and SES-equivalent positions.

Sec. 4. Additional Implementation Considerations. (a) Actions for Agencies with SES-Equivalent Positions. Certain agencies have independent authorities enabling them to establish positions that are equivalent to SES or Senior Professional positions, or an executive personnel system that includes such positions. Whether the positions or employment systems are established in title 5 (for example, FBI/DEA SES) or in other titles of the United States Code (for example, Senior Foreign Service, Defense Intelligence SES, Senior National Intelligence Service), the agency head shall determine the extent to which the agency implements policies and processes to support objectives identified in sections 3(a) and 3(b) of this order for such positions consistent with the agency's authorities and purposes for which the law provides them, with such consultation with the Director of OPM, OMB, and the PMC Subcommittee as the agency may require.

(b) Agency Status and Reporting. Within 45 days of the date of this order, OPM will issue guidance, concurrent with guidance in section 3(a)(v) of this order, that defines regular reporting on the status of each agency's implementation of the provisions in this order.

Sec. 5. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or  
(ii) the functions of the Director of OMB relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.  
(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA