**Deep State Law**

**Michael Flynn** pleaded guilty last Friday to a false statement charge brought by Special Counsel Robert Mueller's office in relation to the Trump-Russia investigation. The retired Army lieutenant general and director of the Defense Intelligence Agency was fired 24 days into his role as National Security Advisor for lying about his meeting with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak. Flynn also admitted to lying about his dealings with Turkey as a private lobbyist.

The case against Flynn, however, **is not so straightforward**. As [Robert Parry](https://consortiumnews.com/2017/12/01/the-scalp-taking-of-gen-flynn/) pointed out last week:

*"****What is arguably most disturbing about this case is that then-National Security Adviser Flynn was pushed into a perjury trap by Obama administration holdovers at the Justice Department who concocted an unorthodox legal rationale for subjecting Flynn to an FBI interrogation four days after he took office****, testing Flynn’s recollection of the conversations while the FBI agents had transcripts of the calls intercepted by the National Security Agency.*

In other words, the Justice Department tapped Flynn’s phone, unmasked his name, printed those transcripts, and then asked him questions to see if his statement would match what they already knew. **His answers were paraphrased. One key thing to keep in mind, is that the agent who questioned him was Peter Strzok. He was also the agent that interviewed Rice, Mills, Abedin, and Clinton—all of whom lied to him—and was also caught sending more than 10 thousand texts to an FBI female attorney with whom he was having a sexual affair. Mueller transferred this ace agent to the HR department. This has never been done. Spies have always been sent to prison, not the HR department. Well, I take that back. Most HR people I have met are most definitely spies. Most of them should be sent prison for what they do to decent hardworking Americans.**

Parry continues; "**Then, just four days into the Trump presidency, an Obama holdover, then-acting Attorney General Sally Yates, primed the Flynn perjury trap** by coming up with a novel legal theory that Flynn although the national security adviser-designate at the time of his late December phone calls with Kislyak was violating the 1799 Logan Act, which prohibits private citizens from interfering with U.S. foreign policy. It should be noted here, that Yates was fired within an hour of her open defiance and public of the President’s immigration policy.

The **Logan Act**, by the way, was *never intended to apply to incoming officials* in the transition period - and in the past 218 years, has resulted in no successful prosecution.

**Yates then performed mental gymnastics based on her Logan Act theory to assert that Flynn's deviation from the transcript of the intercepts meant he might be vulnerable to Russian blackmail.**

This, as Parry points out, would require that the Russians first would have detected the discrepancies; secondly, they would have naively assumed that the U.S. intelligence agencies had not intercepted the conversations, which would have negated any blackmail potential; and thirdly, the Russians would have to do something so ridiculously heavy-handed trying to blackmail Flynn that it would poison relations with the new Trump administration.

In other words, **Michael Flynn was surveilled under a FISA warrant, then set up to fail by Sally Yates when he deviated from the transcripts of his intercepted conversations**. And the judge overseeing his case, **who is on the FISA court,** has suddenly recused himself.

**Last but not least**, journalist Sara Carter revealed on [*hannity.com*](https://www.hannity.com/content/2017-12-04-exclusive-fbi-supervisor-booted-from-mueller-probe-interviewed-mike-flynn/) that the anti-Trump agent fired from Robert Mueller's Special Counsel, **Peter Strzok**, **was one of two FBI agents who interviewed Flynn** on January 24 at the White House, according to a former intelligence official with knowledge of the interview.

[W]ith the recent revelation that Strzok was removed from the Special Counsel investigation for making anti-Trump text messages **it seems likely that the accuracy and veracity of the 302 of Flynn’s interview as a whole should be reviewed and called into question**, said Carter's source, who added "he most logical thing to happen would be to call the other FBI Special Agent present during Flynn’s interview before the Grand Jury to recount his version."

Furthermore, Sara Carter reports that Flynn was tricked into a formal investigation after FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe told the retired three-star general "some agents were heading over (to the White House)," which Flynn thought was related to routine work the FBI had been doing - only to realize they were sent there for him.

*It wasn’t until after they were already in (Flynn’s) office that he realized he was being formerly interviewed.* ***He didn’t have an attorney with him.***

Between the recused judge who sits on the FISA court, Sally Yates' transcript 'trap,' and the fact that the FBI reportedly interviewed Flynn without an attorney present, it will be interesting to see how the case against Michael Flynn holds up

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia judge presiding over the criminal case for President Donald Trump’s former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn has been recused from handling the case, a court spokeswoman said on Thursday. According to a court filing, U.S. District Court Judge Rudolph Contreras, who presided over a Dec. 1 hearing where Flynn pleaded guilty to lying to the Federal Bureau of Investigation about his contacts with Russia, will no longer handle the case.

Court spokeswoman Lisa Klem did not say why Contreras was recused, and added that the case was randomly reassigned. Now, Flynn’s sentencing will be overseen by U.S. District Court Judge Emmet Sullivan. Sullivan was appointed by former Democratic President Bill Clinton.

Flynn was the first member of Trump’s administration to plead guilty to a crime uncovered by Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s wide-ranging probe into Russian attempts to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election and potential collusion by Trump aides. Russia has denied meddling in the election and Trump has dismissed any suggestion of collusion.

Flynn has agreed to cooperate with Mueller’s ongoing investigation. A sentencing date has not yet been set, but the parties are due to return to court on February 1 for a status report hearing. Contreras was appointed to the bench in 2012 by former Democratic President Barack Obama.

He was also appointed to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court in May 2016 for a term lasting through 2023. That court issues warrants that allow Justice Department officials to wiretap individuals, a process that has been thrown into the spotlight amid the investigation into alleged Russian interference in the U.S. election.

The most recent controversy related to FISA warrants involves Peter Strzok, a senior FBI agent who was removed from the Russia investigation for exchanging text messages with a colleague that expressed anti-Trump views.

At a hearing on Thursday at the House Judiciary Committee, Republican lawmaker Jim Jordan pressed FBI Director Christopher Wray on whether a former British spy’s dossier of allegations of Russian financial and personal links to Trump’s campaign and associates was used by Strzok to obtain a FISA warrant to surveil Trump’s transition team.

Judge Sullivan previously served on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and the District of Columbia Court of Appeals under appointments by Republican Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, respectively.

**When a Lie Doesn’t Matter**

President Donald Trump tweeted early Sunday that he never asked former FBI director James Comey to stop investigating his ex-national security adviser Michael Flynn.

Comey testified before Congress in June that Trump asked him if could see to "letting Flynn go." Comey said that request came a day after Trump forced Flynn to resign his White House post.

Trump said in Sunday's early morning tweet, "I never asked Comey to stop investigating Flynn. Just more Fake News covering another Comey lie!"

I never asked Comey to stop investigating Flynn. Just more Fake News covering another Comey lie!

[6:15 AM - Dec 3, 2017](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/937279001684598784)

Flynn pleaded guilty on Friday to lying to the FBI and agreed to cooperate with special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election. Trump fired Comey as FBI director in May.

Tainted (no, very dishonest?) FBI “agent’s role in Clinton probe under review.” Led Clinton Email probe. [@foxandfriends](https://twitter.com/foxandfriends) Clinton money going to wife of another FBI agent in charge.

[7:42 AM - Dec 3, 2017](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/937301085156503552)

[](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump)**[Donald J. Trump](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump)**

[✔@realDonaldTrump](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump)

After years of Comey, with the phony and dishonest Clinton investigation (and more), running the FBI, its reputation is in Tatters - worst in History! But fear not, we will bring it back to greatness.

[8:00 AM - Dec 3, 2017](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/937305615218696193)

Trump shifted his story Saturday on why he fired Flynn, lumping in the retired Army lieutenant general's lies to the FBI along with his untruthfulness with Vice President Mike Pence. The president's initial explanation was that Flynn had to go because he hadn't been straight with Pence about contacts with Russian officials.

Lying to the FBI is a crime, and one that Flynn acknowledged Friday in pleading guilty and agreeing to cooperate with the special counsel's Russia investigation.

Trump tweeted Saturday: "I had to fire General Flynn because he lied to the Vice President and the FBI. He has pled guilty to those lies. It is a shame because his actions during the transition were lawful. There was nothing to hide!"

Amid questions raised by the tweet, Trump associates tried to put distance Saturday evening between the president himself and the tweet. One person familiar with the situation said the tweet was actually crafted by John Dowd, one of the president's personal attorneys. Dowd declined to comment when reached by The Associated Press on Saturday night.

In another email wrinkle in the investigation into Trump's ties to Russia, The New York Times reported Saturday that emails among top Trump transition officials suggested that Flynn was in close contact with other senior members of the transition team before and after he spoke to Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak. A Dec. 29 email from K.T. McFarland, a transition adviser to Trump, suggested that Russian sanctions announced by the Obama administration had been aimed at discrediting Trump's victory.

She wrote the sanctions could also make it more difficult for Trump to ease tensions with Russia, "which has just thrown the U.S.A. election to him," she wrote in the emails obtained by the Times. A White House attorney told the newspaper McFarland only meant that Democrats were portraying it that way.

It's unclear why Trump would cite lying to the FBI as a reason for firing Flynn. Doing so suggests the president knew at the time that Flynn had done something that is against the law, and therefore the investigation could not be as frivolous as he's been portraying.

It's also unclear how he would know that, if information about Russian contacts had not reached him, as he has been implying in his own defense.

Flynn left the White House in February, only acknowledging that he had given an incomplete account to Pence of his conversations with Kislyak. After Trump forced Flynn out, he asked Comey to end the bureau's probe in the matter, according to Comey's account. Comey refused, and Trump fired him, too.

Then-White House spokesman Sean Spicer said after Flynn's firing that it was the result of a "trust issue" and the White House counsel's office had determined there was not a legal issue.

"Whether or not he actually misled the vice president was the issue, and that was ultimately what led to the president asking for and accepting the resignation of Gen. Flynn," Spicer told reporters on Feb. 14. "That's it, pure and simple. It was a matter of trust."

Trump has been publicly dismissive of Comey and of special counsel Robert Mueller's continuing investigation, and was often generous in his appraisal of Flynn, except to say his adviser could not stay on the job after misleading his vice president.

At the time, Pence said Trump was justified in firing Flynn because Flynn had lied to him. Neither Trump nor Pence indicated concern then that the FBI had not been told the true story.

Pence, who served as head of Trump's transition, has not publicly commented on Flynn's plea.

Trump turned to Twitter again later Saturday night, railing about why Flynn was prosecuted but his Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton was not for her alleged misdeeds.

He tweeted: "So General Flynn lies to the FBI and his life is destroyed, while Crooked Hillary Clinton, on that now famous FBI holiday 'interrogation' with no swearing in and no recording, lies many times...and nothing happens to her? Rigged system, or just a double standard?"

He then added: "Many people in our Country are asking what the 'Justice' Department is going to do about the fact that totally Crooked Hillary, AFTER receiving a subpoena from the United States Congress, deleted and 'acid washed' 33,000 Emails? No justice!"

Clinton was voluntarily interviewed for more than three hours at FBI headquarters in July 2016. She was not in custody during her interview and so, in accordance with standard FBI and Justice Department protocol, her interview would not have been recorded. A Justice Department policy on recorded interrogations applies to individuals who have been arrested and are in custody.

It is nonetheless a crime to lie to the FBI about any material fact in an investigation. Comey has said Clinton did not lie to the FBI during her interview.

**The Bitcoin: An AI Creation?**

## Bitcoin’s 3,000 percent profit, heavily concentrated ownership, and thin trading markets could be setting up the first crypto-currency for a manipulative “pump and dump” disaster.

Bitcoin closed the week at [$16,087.32](https://www.coindesk.com/price/), up about 50 percent for the week and over 3,000 percent from its humble Silicon Valley early days in 2012, when it was trading at $5. The Business Insider once said it could be [worth $1 million](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http%3A%2F%2Fread.bi%2F1d420wy&via=businessinsider&text), because it has the same lack of intrinsic value as the U.S. paper dollars it is quoted in. With a valuation of about [$300 billion](https://blockchain.info/charts/market-cap), bitcoin is now worth more than [Bank of America](https://www.cnbc.com/2017/03/08/the-top-10-us-companies-by-market-capitalization.html#slide=11).

Enthusiasts claim that the prime reason for Bitcoin’s astounding price run is its ability to function effectively outside the “[central banking cartel’s longstanding monopoly of the money supply](http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-12-09/if-you-dont-own-any-bitcoin-read) and its historic ruthlessness for squashing all competition the central banking cartel’s longstanding monopoly of the money supply and its historic ruthlessness for squashing all competition,” as Zero Hedge argues.

But Bloomberg [reported](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-08/the-bitcoin-whales-1-000-people-who-own-40-percent-of-the-market) that bitcoin also seems to have all the market trading attributes that supported the fleecing of the public during the Gilded Age over a century ago, where ruthless insiders colluded to corner cheap and illiquid stocks, run up prices to suck in Main Street investors, sell at huge profits, create a price crash, and then do it again.

*advertisement*

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt sought to ban this “[pump and dump](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/37740147/ns/business-stocks_and_economy/t/historic-bear-markets/#.WiwmxEqnGK8)” manipulation by appointing Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr. as the SEC’s first Chairman, because the president supposedly said, “[it takes a thief to catch a thief](http://www.time.com/time/time100/heroes/profile/kennedys01.html).”

Joe Kennedy had made a fortune in the Roaring Twenties through the then legal use of [stock pools](https://www.fool.com/investing/general/2014/11/21/6-things-i-learned-from-the-biography-of-joseph-ke.aspx) to manipulate Wall Street prices. Newspapers would later blame such actions for contributing to the Stock Market Crash of [1929](http://www.professorbainbridge.com/browse/wiki/1929) and triggering the [Great Depression](http://www.professorbainbridge.com/browse/wiki/Great_Depression).

A U.S. Senate Committee on Banking and Currency investigation at the height of the Depression revealed that Kennedy was the largest investor in stock pools that traded Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co. Pool money was divided up into many separate accounts and spread across six stock brokerage firms, then used to wildly trade LOF stock.

David E. Koskoff [wrote](https://www.amazon.com/Joseph-P-Kennedy-life-times/dp/0135111544) in Joseph P. Kennedy: A Life and Times that “false rumors were spread that Libbey-Owens-Ford was going to make liquor bottles. Little by little, the ‘suckers’ bought into Libbey-Owens-Ford.”

The stock pool players sold their LOF stock as it spiked to a high of $37 a share. The shares then crashed to $21 when the fake rumors were outed. Government records show LOF pool participants that bought the stock initially around $15 a share, made a quick profit of $395,000. Joe Kennedy personally pocketed $65,806 in profits, a huge amount of money during the Depression.

Bloomberg comments that with 1,000 so-called “[whales](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-08/the-bitcoin-whales-1-000-people-who-own-40-percent-of-the-market)” controlling 40 percent of the bitcoins, these insiders have an amount of leverage over the cryptocurrency market that is unsurpassed in modern times . The article does not allege that there is any evidence of manipulation, but suggests that a bubble in bitcoin could [hall end in tears](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/it-ll-all-end-in-tears) for a naïve public

**The Drums of War**



by [Tyler Durden](http://www.zerohedge.com/users/tyler-durden)

Dec 3, 2017 11:47 AM

Just days after Pyongyang launched its most advanced ICBM, one which experts warned has the potential to hit a target anywhere on the territory of the United States, North Korea said the U.S. is “begging” for a nuclear war by planning the “largest-ever” joint aerial drill with South Korea just after concluding an exercise with nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, [Bloomberg reported](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-03/n-korea-s-kcna-says-trump-begging-for-nuclear-war-with-drills).

“**Should the Korean peninsula and the world be embroiled in the crucible of nuclear war because of the reckless nuclear war mania of the U.S., the U.S. will have to accept full responsibility for it,”**North Korea’s state-run KCNA said Saturday, citing a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The statement came after Yonhap News reported that six U.S. Raptor stealth fighters planes arrived in South Korea on Saturday for a joint air drill named “Vigilant Ace” scheduled for Dec. 4 to 8. The F-22s flew into South Korea together in a show of force. The stealth fighters, however, were just a small part of the upcoming show of force: according to local media, **some 230 aircraft and up to 16,000 soldiers and airmen are taking part in the drill, which is one of the biggest ever of its kind.**

As part of "Vigilant Ace", US and South Korean forces will be rehearsing for a full-scale war with North Korea, with Yonhap noting that "allies plan to stage simulated attacks on mock North Korean nuclear and missile targets."

Despite Pyongyang's harsh rhetoric, US commanders have downplayed the drill – claiming it is “regular” and not a direct response to North Korea.

As [the Star details](https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/world-news/664240/North-Korea-War-US-Kim-Jong-un-Donald-Trump-Bombers-Fighters-F-22-F-35-Vigilant-Ace-Nuke), "at least 230 warplanes from both the US and the South will take part, alongside 12,000 US troops and airmen and at least 4,000 expected to represent Seoul." The drill, which  lasts from December 4 until December 8, will see aircraft flying over eight airbases in across the Korean Peninsula.


US warplanes including fighters and bombers often blast over the Korean Peninsula

The stars of the drill will be the state-of-the-art F-35 Lightning IIs and F-22 Raptors leading the US’s wing. Both fighter jets outmatch anything in North Korea’s arsenal and could win most of the war against Kim by themselves.

F-35s can fly at speeds of 1,200mph and are capable of carrying nuclear bombs and bunker busters.

Meanwhile, the F-22 can hit speeds of up to 1,500 mph and are armed with Vulcan miniguns and Sidewinder missiles.

Commenting on the historic exercise, the US military said that “Vigilant Ace 18 highlights the longstanding military partnership, commitment and enduring friendship between two nations." The statement added: “**It is designed to ensure peace and security on the Korean Peninsula, and reaffirms the US commitment to stability in the Northeast Asia region.”**


F-22s will be dispatched to take part in Vigilant Ace

In reality, it will likely provoke North Korea into yet another ICBM launch.  To be sure, the Kim regime traditionally rages over the drills on its border, claiming they are rehearsals for invasion, although it may well be right: US forces have been flooding into the Pacific this year with warships, warplanes, missiles and the army all on standby.

Vigilant Ace comes after Donald Trump warned he would “take care” of North Korea following the missile test.

Meanwhile, showing no signs of de-escalation, North Korea has tested dozens of missiles this year, and claimed its nukes can now hit the US. Kim is also feared to be readying the dreaded Juche Bird missile – a live nuke fired out into the heart of the Pacific.

A former NATO supreme allied commander says there’s a 10 percent chance the United States will “stumble” into war with North Korea.

[**In an interview aired Sunday**](https://omny.fm/shows/cats-interviews/admiral-james-stavridis) with radio host John Catsimatidis on [**“The Cats Roundtable”**](http://am970theanswer.com/radioshow/620)on 970 AM, Admiral James Stavridis said North Korea’s latest missile test “is a dangerous new step,” and asserting its progress has been aided by “some level of outside engagement” from either China or Russia.

“China is going to have to make a choice about whether or not it will continue to align with North Korea or if they will stand with the rest of the global community and stop this,” he said, adding: “They could stop that economy in a heartbeat. We're going to need to put more pressure on them…”

But, he warned, “at this point there's about a 10 percent chance that we stumble into a war that nobody wants.”

“All roads to Pyongyang lead through Beijing,” he added.

**China Mutual Defense Treaty**

The government of China has taken the extraordinary step of publishing a full page newspaper story telling residents of Jilin - near the border of North Korea - how they can survive a nuclear war.  While some believe this story is based on concerns that North Korea might actually attack China, it more likely that China knows a war is about to break out between the US and North Korea which WILL involve the detonation of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula!

Should a nuclear attack ever occur near China’s Jilin Province, which shares its border with [North Korea](https://m.theepochtimes.com/t-north-korea), residents will now know how to protect themselves—thanks to a full-page article that ran in the local state-run newspaper Jilin Daily on Dec. 6.

The article, titled **“Nuclear Weapons General Knowledge and How to Protect Oneself,”** described in great detail the features of nuclear weapons, how they explode, their after-effects, and how to take shelter and maximize one’s chances of surviving an attack.

For instance, if one is situated outside: either hide in a ditch and cover one’s exposed skin with light-colored clothing, or submerge oneself in a nearby river or lake, the article advises.

The article, which came with cartoon illustrations of how to minimize the effects of radiation, was also accompanied by two pieces on emergency items to pack and another titled, “common traits between wartime air attacks and normal disasters.”  Here is an image of the actual newspaper article:



The article did not mention by name [North Korea](https://m.theepochtimes.com/t-north-korea), Jilin’s neighbor that has recently heightened tensions with a slew of nuclear tests.

But considering that North Korea’s nuclear site is estimated to be about 76 kilometers (47 miles) from the border with Jilin, the precautions are probably a good idea should tensions further escalate. Tonghua City, with 2.3 million residents, is about 200 kilometers (124 miles) from the North Korean border.

South Korea and the United States recently launched their largest-ever joint [aerial drills](https://m.theepochtimes.com/south-korea-u-s-kick-off-largest-air-exercise-amid-north-korean-warnings_2377698.html) on Monday, Dec. 4, a week after North Korea said it had tested its most advanced intercontinental ballistic missile in its weapons program.

##

## US upped-the-ante; Conducts simulated bombing runs on North Korea

* **The US responded to North Korea’s latest missile launch with a simulated bomb run from a B-1B Lancer bomber and an F-22 in a marked escalation in military signaling.**
* **North Korea hates the B-1 bomb runs and have threatened to shoot the plane down.**
* **The US’s F-22 is fully stealth and North Korea likely can’t hope to down it.**
* **With the US’s most lethal planes doing the signaling, it’s unclear how much higher tensions can rise.**

The US carried out another simulated bomb run with a supersonic B-1B bomber on Wednesday, but this time it included the US’s top-of-the-line air superiority fighter, the F-22, [according to Yonhap](http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2017/12/06/0401000000AEN20171206001652315.html).

B-1 flights represent the [US’s go-to response for North Korean provocations](http://uk.businessinsider.com/b-1b-lancer-us-bomber-that-could-strike-north-korean-missile-sites-2017-11), such as missile tests, and the bomber flights draw a strong, sometimes dangerously escalating response from Pyongyang.

Previously, North Korea [threatened to shoot down B-1s](http://www.businessinsider.com/north-korea-shoot-down-us-b-1b-lancer-bomber-2017-9) flying even outside its airspace and to [loft missiles at Guam, where the B-1s are based](http://uk.businessinsider.com/north-korea-seriously-considering-plan-missile-strike-on-us-military-in-guam-2017-8).

But North Korea has a problem there. It apparently [can’t track the B-1 in flight](https://www.nknews.org/2017/09/north-korea-did-not-respond-to-u-s-bomber-flight-on-saturday-nis/) because of its outdated radar and air-defense systems, according to NK News.

The [F-22 is the world’s stealthiest aircraft](http://www.businessinsider.com/f-22-raptor-vs-russia-su-57-fighter-jet-2017-12), meaning it’s extremely unlikely North Korea could see it coming.



Photo: A pair of B-1B Lancer bombers soar over Wyoming in an undated file photo. source Reuters

The combined B-1 and F-22 drill represents a step up in the normal tit-for-tat between the US and North Korea. It also comes during the Vigilant Ace aerial exercise that China and Russia warned the US about.

“Through the exercise, the South Korean and US air forces have demonstrated the alliance’s strong will and capability for strong retaliation against North Korea’s nuclear and missile threats,” South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said, according to Yonhap.

But with the US using its best planes to message North Korea, and Pyongyang demonstrating missiles that experts assess [can hit anywhere in the US](http://www.businessinsider.com/north-korea-nuclear-club-brings-us-closer-to-war-2017-11), it’s unclear just how much higher tensions on the Korean Peninsula could escalate.

## Here's the "likely" outcome

North Korea has developed both long range missiles AND nuclear bombs, both of which they were specifically forbidden to do by the United Nations Security Council.

Despite decades of negotiations, foreign aid, ever-escalating economic sanctions imposed by the UN, and lots of talk, North Korea has lied, cheated, and stolen in its efforts to secure these weapons and the means to deliver them.

The United States has made explicitly clear we will NOT accept North Korea having these weapons and the means to deliver them to the United States.

North Korea has made explicitly clear they will NOT give-up those weapons.

These two diametrically-opposite positions cannot peacefully co-exist. **War is now inevitable.  It cannot -- and will not -- be avoided.**

China knows this.

The United States knows this.

North Korea knows this.

**So, America, we're going to war.  Get used to the idea because it is coming - and coming soon.**

The US will attack North Korea first.  We will target their missile and nuclear weapons facilities, then we will STOP.  We do not plan an invasion or regime change.

What comes next is anyone's guess.  Will North Korea "respond" or will they "react."  There's a world of difference between those two things.

If North Korea "responds" it may be a reasoned, conventional attack.  If, however, North Korea "reacts" then anything is possible -- even their launching of nuclear-tipped missiles against the mainland of the United States.

If North Korea uses a nuke against . . . anyone . . .  the United States ***will*** utterly obliterate them with nuclear weapons launched from US Nuclear Missile Submarines.

China probably believes North Korea will "react" instead of "respond" and when that takes place, the nukes will fly.

THIS is, in my personal view, the reason for China telling its people "How to survive" a nuclear war.  They don't fear an attack against China from North Korea, they are realizing that nuclear fallout from inside North Korea will blow into China and they want their people safe.

## CHINA-North Korea Mutual Defense Treaty

There is a long standing Treaty between China and North Korea which basically says that China will defend North Korea if it is attacked.

It is remotely possible that China may launch against the US and they are telling their people how to survive because they know the US will launch back.  While this is a possibility, I find it to be very remote.

We're China's best business customer. China is our best financial lender.  It makes no sense to destroy those relationships with war.

So again, my bet it, the US attacks North Korea (SOON) and then . . . . who knows?

I believe such an attack will come as Winter really sets-in over there because winters in Korea are about the same as Grand Forks, North Dakota.  And the North Koreans do not have the infrastructure and logistics chain to supply their troops if war breaks out in winter.  We, however, actually do have the infrastructure and logistics chain to supply OUR troops - especially our missile crews, which will take care of most of this effort . . . at least initially.

The only trouble might come if we do not know where all of North Korea’s missiles might be. They’re mobile. They may even have them in subs off our coast. They even have weapons inside our country in position. They certainly have the money. They have the technology. And, they would be seen by the UN as heroes if they could strike a deep wound against America, and possibly cause us to begin eating or own young.

**Are you Thinking in 3-D?**

Registration is open for Phase 3 of NASA's [3D Printed Habitat Challenge](https://www.space.com/36799-nasa-3d-printed-habitat-challenge-awards.html), which searches for ways to create shelters for astronauts on locations such as the moon and Mars.

The $2 million prize for this phase encourages competitors to create miniature habitats using "indigenous materials" from the location at which the habitat is built. (An example of this would be lunar regolith, or soil, for a habitat on the moon.) There are five levels of competition; teams may register [at this website through Feb. 15, 2018](https://www.bradley.edu/challenge/).

"The vision is that autonomous machines will someday be deployed to the moon, Mars or beyond to construct shelters for human habitation," NASA officials [said in a statement](https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/spacetech/centennial_challenges/3DPHab/nasa-opens-2M-third-phase-of-3d-printed-habitat-competition/). "On Earth, these same capabilities could be used to produce affordable housing wherever it is needed, or where access to conventional building materials and skills are limited."

The competition has already seen two phases. Phase 1 focused on architectural concepts and was completed in 2015, while [Phase 2](https://www.space.com/37427-nasa-mars-habitat-challenge-phase-two-winners.html) examined the manufacturing of structural components and finished in August 2017.

"The ideas and technologies this competition has already produced are encouraging, and we are excited to see what this next phase will bring," Monsi Roman, program manager of NASA's Centennial Challenges, said in the statement. "The solutions we seek from our competitions are revolutionary, which by nature makes them extremely difficult. But this only fuels our teams to work harder to innovate and solve."

The competition is run as a partnership between NASA and Bradley University and includes sponsors Caterpillar Inc., Bechtel and Brick & Mortar Ventures.

**Narcissism Part Two**

Narcissists (those who meet the criteria for Narcissistic Personality Disorder), sociopaths and psychopaths, speak in the language of crazy-making, of projection, of word salad, of [gaslighting](http://www.elephantjournal.com/2015/08/gaslighting-the-mind-game-everyone-should-know-about/) and of pathological envy.

While I will be focusing on narcissistic abusers in this post, keep in mind that all three are unable to empathize with others and frequently exploit others for their own agenda. If you encounter someone with narcissistic traits, they could very well fall towards the extreme end of the psychopathy spectrum and be a sociopath or psychopath.

Narcissistic and partners with Antisocial Personality Disorder engage in chronic manipulation and devaluation of their victims, leaving victims feeling worthless, anxious and even suicidal. This type of continual manipulation, which includes an idealization-devaluation-discard abuse cycle where they “[lovebomb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Love_bombing%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)” their partners, devalue them through stonewalling, gaslighting, smear campaigns, verbal and emotional abuse, then discard them until the trauma begins again, also known as narcissistic abuse—abuse by a partner with NPD or on the far end of the narcissistic spectrum.

Their manipulation is psychological and emotionally devastating and very dangerous, especially considering the [brain circuitry for emotional and physical pain are one and the same](https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/tech-support/201602/five-things-everyone-should-know-about-verbal-aggression-1). What a victim feels when they are punched in the stomach can be similar to the pain a victim feels when they are verbally and emotionally abused, and the effects of narcissistic abuse can be crippling and long-lasting, even resulting in symptoms of PTSD or Complex PTSD. Needless to say, this type of abuse can leave psychological and emotional scars that can last a lifetime.

Yet what makes narcissistic abuse so dangerous is that it is often not recognized as abuse.

Mental health professionals are only now beginning to research and understand what [Narcissist Victim Syndrome](http://narcissisticbehavior.net/narcissistic-victim-syndrome-what-the-heck-is-that/) is, although survivors have been speaking about it for years. Narcissistic abuse is primarily psychological and emotional (though victims can suffer physical abuse as well) and since these abusers employ very covert and insidious methods to abuse their partners, they are able to escape accountability for the abuse because of the false persona they present to the outside world which is usually a charming mask that hides their cruelty.

Survivors often blame themselves for the abuse, not being able to put into words what they’ve experienced. Once they learn the vocabulary of narcissistic abuse, they are armed with the tools, the insights, and the resources to heal. Learning the language and techniques of these predators means that we are better prepared to identify the red flags when interacting with people who display malignant narcissism or antisocial traits and that we can better protect ourselves from exploitation and abuse. It means we can set appropriate boundaries with others, and make informed decisions about who we keep in our lives.

Understanding the nature of these toxic interactions and how they affect us has an enormous impact on our ability to engage in self-care. I personally know how devastating this type of abuse can be, especially when survivors are not able to speak of their experiences in the traditional discourse about what abuse entails and are often alienated and invalidated by friends, family members, and even mental health professionals who are not trained in this type of abuse. As a survivor, author, coach and a researcher, I’ve made it my mission to continue educating the public about the effects of narcissistic abuse, the techniques of narcissistic abusers, and the fact that healing from this type of abuse is possible.

These pathological individuals walk among us every day in their false masks, often unseen and unnoticed because of how eerily normal they are. They can be of any gender, background, and socioeconomic status. Often times, they are charming, charismatic, the life of the party, able to hook their victims in and dupe the public effortlessly. It’s very possible you’ve dated, worked with, had a family member or friend with Narcissistic Personality Disorder or Antisocial Personality Disorder in your lifetime.

Learning their emotional language means acknowledging that their cruelty is not only explicit but implicit, deeply ingrained in nuances in their facial expressions, gestures, tones, and most importantly, the contradictory mismatch between their words and actions. Their cruelty is deliberate and designed to control and ultimately destroy their victims.

These types of abusers are fluent in manipulation, well-versed in sadism, in control and in rage. It is akin to psychological and emotional rape—a sordid violation of boundaries and of the trust the victim has given his or her abuser.

Narcissistic abusers can attack at any given moment, using their choice weapons of sarcasm, condescending remarks, name-calling, and blame-shifting whenever they perceive you as a threat or whenever they need entertainment in the form of an emotional reaction. They can also use their nonverbal language in the form of a sadistic smirk, the cold deadness in their eyes while professing their to love you, their bored, sulky looks or their cruel laughter to bully you into believing that you are inferior to them.

Survivors spend much of the devaluation phase of an abusive cycle (the phase where they are thrust off the pedestal, only to be demeaned and degraded) constantly on their toes, careful not to make a sound lest they incur the wrath of their narcissist. Yet walking on eggshells doesn’t help, as the narcissist can and will use anything and everything you’ve said or done against you.

There are three key pieces of information that narcissists frequently collect in the idealization phase of the relationship where they are first lovebombing and grooming you with excessive attention, that they later wield against you in the devaluation and discard phases in their special language of depravity:

#### 1. The flaws, shortcomings, insecurities and secrets you’ve confided in the narcissist about.

The narcissistic abuser rejoices when you share your wounds, your struggles, and your triggers early on. It is then that much easier for them to get underneath your skin and inside of your mind. During the early stages of the relationship, you are likely to feel so trusting and open with a narcissist that you share everything with them: your past, your heartbreaks and what you perceive to be your flaws.

You may see this as a way of establishing rapport, a connection with your partner, a way of being vulnerable and intimate.  A narcissistic abuser sees it as dinner laying itself on the table. They will pretend to support you and empathize with you when you reveal these to them initially, but will later use these to provoke you, belittle you and demean you during the devaluation phase.

Remember: The narcissist has no limits as to what he or she will use, they thrive on the fact that you are being retraumatized. Their ability to make you regress right back into the original trauma with just one turn of phrase makes them feel powerful. And they live for that power, because it is the only power they have. To a narcissist, any open wound is an invitation to cut deeper and the narcissist can and always will cut a wound even deeper than the first.

#### 2. Your strengths and accomplishments, especially the ones they are pathologically envious of.

Initially when you were on the pedestal, the narcissist couldn’t get enough of your strengths and accomplishments. They couldn’t stop raving about you to family and friends, showing you off, treating you like a trophy, an essential part of them. Their association with you inevitably made them feel superior and important. It bolstered their false image of being a normal human being who could get a “prize” like you.

In the devaluation phase, a narcissist will literally translate your strengths into perceived flaws. Once you were “confident and sexy,” but now you’re “cocky and vain.” Before, you were “intelligent and driven,” and now you’re just a “know-it-all” or a “a smartass.”

They gaslight you into believing that your value and worth are not real, all while projecting their own sense of inferiority onto you. They will degrade, minimize, and ignore what you accomplish, now acting as if it means nothing to them and as if it is of little importance or value to the world. They will feed you falsehoods about your lack of competence and ability. They will claim to be better at you, all the while stealing your ideas.

 They will taunt you into believing that you’re not capable of the smallest of tasks, even if you are out of their league professionally and personally. They will threaten to ruin your reputation and they will often sabotage major events. They will trample upon your dreams, your aspirations, your beliefs, your personality, your goals, your profession, your talents, your appearance, your lifestyle – all the while extolling their own.

Their sudden turn of language takes a toll; it is traumatizing, shocking and unexpectedly vicious. Everything they once praised will inevitably be turned and twisted into a weakness. This is because they cannot stand you “winning” and being better than them at something. To them, everything is a competition and a game that they must win at all costs. They seek to destroy you in every way possible so that you, in turn, destroy and sabotage yourself—all the while they sit back, relax and watch the unraveling of everything you’ve worked hard for.

#### 3. Your need to please them and their need to be perpetually dissatisfied.

The narcissist cultivated your need for his or her validation and approval early on in the idealization phase. By making you dependent on his or her praise, they conditioned you to seek the excessive admiration that only they could dole out. Now, as they devalue you, they use your need for validation to their advantage by withdrawing frequently, appearing sullen at every opportunity, and converting every generous thing you do for them as a failure on your part that falls short of their ludicrous expectations. Nothing can meet their high standards and everything wrong will be pointed out. In fact, even the things they do wrong shall be pinned on you.

Their blame-shifting language, passive-aggressive sulky behavior and narcissistic rage at the slightest injury becomes all-consuming for the victim, as the victim attempts to strengthen his or her efforts to meet the standards of the narcissist —standards which inevitably set the victim up for failure. For this, the victim is met with verbal assault, accusations and unfair comparisons which instill in him or her a pervasive sense of worthlessness and never being “enough.”

If the victim ever attempts to make the narcissistic abuser accountable for being a decent human being, they will lash out in rage, blaming them for the abuse and stonewalling the victim into silence. They love to have the last word, especially for the language they’ve created.

Taking back our control and power from a narcissistic abuser means going to war with the language they use against us. This means seeking validating, professional help for the abuse we’ve suffered, detaching from these people in our lives, learning more about the techniques of abusers, finding support networks, sharing our story to raise awareness and finding the appropriate healing modalities that can enable us to transcend and thrive after their abuse.

We can channel this experience of abuse for our highest good and for the greater good. We just have to be willing create in its place what I call a “reverse discourse”—a new language and a rewriting of the narrative that instead lifts us, motivates us, inspires us and revives us by replacing the narcissist’s cutting words with our own powerful truth.

**The Real CFPB**

The New York Post’s Paul Sperry reports that the CFPB is engaged in a wide-variety of corruption.

Everything from amassing secret ledgers to using penalties to ‘launder,’ funds into left-wing causes. Of course, because the CFPB operates independently of the U.S. Government, a full audit of the agency’s balance sheet have never been done. This sad reality may very well change under Mulvaney’s leadership.

*Bounced business owners and industry reps from secret meetings it’s held with Democrat operatives, radical civil-rights activists, trial lawyers and other “community advisers,” according to a report by the House Financial Services Committee.*

*Retained GMMB, the liberal advocacy group that created ads for the Obama and Hillary Clinton presidential campaigns, for more than $40 million, making the Democrat shop the sole recipient of CFPB’s advertising expenditure, Rubin says. […]*

*Funneled a large portion of the more than $5 billion in penalties collected from defendants to community organizers aligned with Democrats — “a slush fund by another name,” said a consultant who worked with CFPB on its Civil Penalty Fund and requested anonymity.*

Reports of the CFPB awarding lucrative contracts to left-leaning organizations is nothing new. The CFPB [**awarded**](https://www.usaspending.gov/transparency/Pages/TransactionDetails.aspx?RecordID=B91E46C0-4D13-4488-BE99-E8A8E5ADFE12&AwardID=57929676&AwardType=C) GMMB, the Obama-Hillary ad firm, a $14.7 million [**contract**](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2017/08/09/consumer-financial-protection-bureau-awarded-14-million-contract-to-progressive-firm/) for “agency media and resource communication,” in June of 2017 and a $16 million payday to marketing materials about student loans and mortgages.

“Most likely President Trump will not appoint a replacement until Mulvaney has exposed the corruption within it. That sunlight is toxic to Elizabeth Warren and can potentially be politically destructive to the Democrats.” wrote Sundance of [**Conservative Treehouse**](https://theconservativetreehouse.com/2017/11/27/acting-cfpb-director-mick-mulvaney-holds-brilliant-press-conference-video/#more-142624) on November 27th.

While the amount revealed pales in comparison to what is really ‘under the hood,’ it’s important to remember the CFPB’s activities are shrouded in mystery. Perhaps, not for long if the Trump administration gets its way.

Warren may one day see the sunlight

**The SLAP Act**

A Republican congressman plans to introduce a bill Monday that would threaten huge fines and prison time for elected officials accused of sheltering illegal immigrant criminals from deportation, in the wake of the not-guilty verdict in the Kate Steinle murder trial.

Indiana Rep. Todd Rokita’s bill is one of the most aggressive pieces of legislation to date aimed at sanctuary city policies, going beyond the Justice Department’s threat to cut off grants to those jurisdictions.

“Politicians don’t get to pick and choose what laws to comply with,” Rokita told Fox News. “Americans are dying because politicians sworn to uphold the law refuse to do so.”

His “Stopping Lawless Actions of Politicians (SLAP) Act” would hold state and local lawmakers criminally responsible for refusing to comply with federal immigration enforcement efforts. The Republican’s bill would subject violators to a $1 million fine and up to five years in prison if they are convicted.

“It’s time the federal government gets serious about enforcing immigration laws and holding politicians accountable who conspire to break them,” said Rokita.

Rokita also supported “Kate’s Law” – legislation that would boost penalties for illegal immigrants who were previously deported and that was named after Steinle.

On Thursday, Jose Ines Garcia Zarate, an illegal immigrant who already had been deported back to Mexico five times, was acquitted in the 2015 murder of Steinle on a San Francisco pier.

Zarate’s attorneys argued Zarate had found a gun that accidentally discharged, and the bullet ricocheted off the ground before hitting Steinle. Prosecutors argued Zarate intentionally shot 32-year-old Steinle.

The killing revived a national debate over sanctuary city policies, as some lawmakers as well as Steinle’s family faulted San Francisco for releasing the suspect from a local jail without notifying federal immigration officials.

President Trump, who frequently cited Steinle’s case on the campaign trail, called the not-guilty verdict “disgraceful” and a “complete travesty of justice.”
Attorney General Jeff Sessions took direct aim at the city, saying San Francisco’s “decision to protect criminal aliens led to the preventable and heartbreaking death of Kate Steinle.”

In an interview prior to Thursday’s verdict, Steinle’s family said they wanted the case out of the national spotlight. “We just want to get this over with and move on with our lives, and think about Kate on our terms,” Jim Steinle, Kate’s father, told the San Francisco Chronicle.

Following the verdict, he said his family was shocked Zarate was convicted only of firearm possession.

On Friday, the DOJ released an amended arrest warrant for Zarate for a supervised release violation.

Rokita’s bill follows a similar attempt in Texas to punish local officials who ignore federal requests to hold and then potentially turn over suspects for possible deportation. That law is the subject of a federal court challenge.

**The Heliosphere**

**by**[**Art Rosenblum**](http://www.awaken.cc/)**, December 1st, 2017**

This is the Russian perspective on earth changes. Hard facts that are going unreported in America. The atmospheres of the planets are changing. Dr. Dmitriev's work shows that the planets themselves are changing. They are undergoing changes in their atmospheres

For example, the Martian atmosphere is getting sizably thicker than it was before. The Mars observer probe in 1997 lost one of its mirrors, which caused it to crash, because the atmosphere was about twice as dense as they calculated, and basically the wind on that little mirror was so high that it blew it right off the device.

**Earth's moon is growing an atmosphere.**

Also, the moon is growing an atmosphere that's made up of a compound Dmitriev refers to as ''Natrium.'' Dmitriev says that, around the moon, there is this 6,000- kilometre- deep layer of Natrium that wasn't there before.

And we're having this kind of change in Earth's atmosphere in the upper levels, where HO gas is forming that wasn't there before; it simply did not exist in the quantity that it does now. It's not related to global warming and it's not related to CFCs or fluorocarbon emissions or any of that stuff. It's just showing up.

**Magnetic fields and brightness of the planets are changing.**

The planets are experiencing sizable changes in their overall brightness. Venus, for example, is showing us marked increases in its overall brightness. Jupiter has gotten to have such a high energetic charge that there is actually a visible tube of ionizing radiation that's formed between its moon, Io. You can actually see the luminous energy tube in photographs that have been taken more recently.

And the planets are having a change in their fields. The magnetic fields are becoming stronger. Jupiter's magnetic field has more than doubled. Uranus's magnetic field is changing. Neptune's magnetic field is increasing. These planets are becoming brighter. Their magnetic field strength is getting higher. Their atmospheric qualities are changing.

Uranus and Neptune appear to have had recent pole shifts. When the Voyager 2 space probe flew past Uranus and Neptune, the apparent north and south magnetic poles were sizably offset from where the rotational pole was. In one case, it was 50 degrees off, and in the other case the difference was around 40 degrees, both of which are pretty big changes.

The overall changes could essentially be broken down into three categories: Energy field changes, luminosity changes, and atmospheric changes.
 **Overall volcanic activity has increased 500 percent since 1975**

On the Earth, we're seeing the changes even more completely. For example, Michael Mandeville has done research that has shown that the overall volcanic activity on the Earth since 1975 has increased by roughly 500 percent. The overall earthquake activity has increased by 400 percent just since 1973.
 **Natural disasters increased 410 percent between 1963 and 1993**

Dr. Dmitriev did a very elaborate calculation of natural disasters. He showed that if you compare the years 1963 through 1993, the overall amount of natural disasters of all different kinds - whether you are talking hurricanes, typhoons, mud slides, tidal waves, you name it - have increased by 410 percent.

**The Sun's magnetic field has increased by 230 percent since 1901**

There's a study by Dr. Mike Lockwood from Rutherford Appleton National Laboratories in California, who has been investigating the Sun. He has discovered that since 1901, the overall magnetic field of the Sun has become 230 percent stronger than it was before.
 **More than just Earth Changes**

So, all in all, what we're seeing is a lot more than just what they call Earth Changes. Some people get into the idea that there is an interaction between the Earth and the Sun that's going on here.

Very, very few people are aware of the work that is being done in the Russian National Academy of Sciences in Siberia, specifically in Novosibirsk, where they are doing this research. They've come to the conclusion that the only possible thing that could be causing this energetic change all throughout the Solar System is that we are moving into an area of energy that is different - that is higher.

**The basic structure of the Heliosphere (courtesy of NASA)**

**The glowing plasma at the leading edge of our Solar System has recently increased 1000 percent**

Now, check this out. The Sun itself has a magnetic field, of course, and that magnetic field creates an egg around the Solar System, which is known as the heliosphere. The heliosphere is shaped like a teardrop, with the long and thin end of the drop pointing in the opposite direction from the direction that we're travelling. It's just like a comet, where the tail is always pointing away from the Sun.

The Russians have looked at the leading edge of this heliosphere, and they have observed glowing, excited plasma energy there. This plasma energy used to be 10 astronomical units deep (an astronomical unit is the distance from the Earth to the Sun, 93,000,000 miles). So ten astronomical units represents the normal thickness of this glowing energy that we used to see at the front end of the Solar System.

Today, that glowing plasma has gone to 100 astronomical units deep. Although Dmitriev's paper does not give an exact timeline, we can assume that this increase happened in the same 1963 to 1993 period as the increase he found in natural disasters. Whenever it happened, that's a 1,000 percent increase in the overall brightness of the energy at the front end of the Solar System.

And this means that the Solar System itself is moving into an area where the energy is more highly charged. That higher-charged energy is in turn exciting the plasma and causing more of it to form, so you see more luminosity, more brightness. This energy is then flowing into the Sun, which in turn emits the energy and spreads it out along its equatorial plane, which is called the Ecliptic.

This in turn is saturating interplanetary space, which causes the solar emissions to travel more quickly and charge up the energy on the planets.

And this is conscious energy that is changing how the planet works, how it functions, and what kind of life it supports. The harmonics of the DNA spiral itself are altering. That's the real, hidden cause of spontaneous mass evolutions in previous epochs of time.

All this is happening all at the same time, and it's all working up to a crescendo where there is going to be a sudden shift.

In other words, we will get to the point where we are so far into the new level of energy that there will be a sudden expansion of the basic harmonic wavelengths that the Sun emits as it radiates energy out of itself. This increase in energy emission will change the basic nature of all matter in the Solar System. The planets are pushed slightly farther away from the Sun and the atoms and molecules that make them up actually expand in terms of their physical size.

**Good Woman With a Gun**

## On Tuesday an unidentified good woman with a gun saw a law enforcement officer being attacked and shot his alleged attacker with her handgun.

The incident occurred outside a Chevron in Dawson County, Georgia.

According to Fox 5, Sgt. Randy Harkness [gave](http://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/woman-comes-to-aid-of-dawson-county-sergeant-during-fight) a homeless man a courtesy ride to the Chevron and was giving him some money when the man allegedly began assaulting the officer. A woman sitting in a car noticed the assault, grabbed her gun and stepped in to help the officer.

The Chevron owner said the woman “shot off a round. The guy got off the police officer and she shot another round and he was running that way I think, there was three shots,”

*advertisement*

Law enforcement indicates the homeless man was hit “by at least one slug,” yet ran across the street to a McDonald’s where he allegedly punched a 75-year-old woman in the face. Authorities believe he was trying to steal the woman’s car.

The homeless man was tackled by customers and held for police.

After the man was arrested, the Chevron owner said, “It could have been worse, mate, thank you for that lady who was carrying.”

**Behemoth Black Hole**

Astronomers have discovered the oldest supermassive black hole ever found — a behemoth that grew to 800 million times the mass of the sun when the universe was just 5 percent of its current age, a new study finds.

This newfound giant black hole, which formed just 690 million years after the Big Bang, could one day help shed light on a number of cosmic mysteries, such as how black holes could have reached gargantuan sizes quickly after the Big Bang and how the universe got cleared of the murky fog that once filled the entire cosmos, the researchers said in the new study.

Supermassive black holes with masses millions to billions of times that of the sun are thought to lurk at the hearts of most, if not all, galaxies. Previous research suggested these giants release extraordinarily large amounts of light when they rip apart stars and devour matter, and likely are the driving force behind quasars, which are among the brightest objects in the universe. [The Strangest Black Holes in the Universe]

Astronomers can detect quasars from the farthest corners of the cosmos, making quasars among the most distant objects known. The farthest quasars are also the earliest known quasars — the more distant one is, the more time its light took to reach Earth.

The previous record for the earliest, most distant quasar was set by ULAS J1120+0641. That quasar is located 13.04 billion light-years from Earth and existed about 750 million years after the Big Bang. The newfound quasar (and its black hole), named ULAS J1342+0928, is 13.1 billion light-years away.

Explaining how black holes could have gobbled up enough matter to reach supermassive sizes early in cosmic history has proved extraordinarily challenging for scientists. As such, researchers want to look at as many early supermassive black holes as possible to learn more about their growth and their effects on the rest of the cosmos.

"The most distant quasars can provide key insights to outstanding questions in astrophysics," said study lead author Eduardo Bañados, an astrophysicist at the Carnegie Institution for Science.

The researchers predicted that only 20 to 100 quasars as bright and as distant as the newfound quasar exist in the whole sky visible from Earth.

"This particular quasar is so bright that it will become a gold mine for follow-up studies and will be a crucial laboratory to study the early universe," Bañados told Space.com. "We have already secured observations for this object with a number of the most powerful telescopes in the world. More surprises may arise."

The researchers detected and analyzed quasar ULAS J1342+0928 using one of the Magellan Telescopes at Las Campanas Observatory in Chile, as well as the Large Binocular Telescope in Arizona and the Gemini North telescope in Hawaii. Its central black hole has a mass about 800 million times that of the sun and existed when the universe was just 690 million years old, or just 5 percent of its current age. [No Escape: The Anatomy of a Black Hole (Infographic)]

"All that mass — almost 1 billion times the mass of the sun — needs to be gathered in less than 690 million years," Bañados said. "That is extremely difficult to achieve and is something that theorists will need to explain in their models."

Quasars like J1342+0928 are rare. The researchers searched one-tenth of the entire sky visible from Earth and found just one quasar from this early epoch.

Only about 60 million years separate this newfound quasar from the previous record holder. Still, this span of time was "about 10 percent of the age of the universe at those early cosmic epochs, when things were evolving very rapidly," Bañados said. That means this difference in time could yield important clues about the evolution of the early universe.

This new quasar is also of interest to scientists because it comes from a time known as "the epoch of reionization," when the universe emerged from its dark ages. "It was the universe's last major transition and one of the current frontiers of astrophysics," Bañados said in a statement.

Right after the Big Bang, the universe was a rapidly expanding hot soup of ions, or electrically charged particles. About 380,000 years later, these ions cooled and coalesced into neutral hydrogen gas. The universe stayed dark until gravity pulled matter together into the first stars. The intense ultraviolet light from this era caused this murky neutral hydrogen to get excited and ionize, or gain electric charge, and the gas has remained in that state since that time. Once the universe became reionized, light could travel freely through space.

Artist’s rendering of the discovery of the most-distant quasar known. It is surrounded by neutral hydrogen, indicating that it is from the period called the epoch of reionization, when the universe's first light sources turned on.

Artist’s rendering of the discovery of the most-distant quasar known. It is surrounded by neutral hydrogen, indicating that it is from the period called the epoch of reionization, when the universe's first light sources turned on.

Much remains unknown about the epoch of reionization, such as what sources of light caused reionization. Some prior work suggested that massive stars were mostly responsible for reionization, but other research hinted that black holes were a significant, and potentially dominant, culprit behind this event. [7 Surprising Things About the Universe]

"How and when the reionization of the universe occurred has fundamental implications on how the universe evolved," Bañados said.

The new findings revealed that a large fraction of the hydrogen in the immediate vicinity of the newfound quasar was neutrally charged. This suggests that this quasar comes from well within the epoch of reionization, and further analysis of it could yield insight into what happened during this pivotal time.

However, to really learn more about the epoch of reionization, scientists need more than just one or two early, distant quasars to look at. "We need to find more of these quasars at similar or larger distances," Bañados said. "This is extremely difficult, as they are very rare. This is really like finding the needle in a haystack."

Still, the fact that this newfound quasar is so bright and large suggests that "it's probably not the first quasar ever formed, so we need to keep searching," Bañados said.

The scientists detailed their findings in the Dec. 7 issue of the journal Nature. The researchers also released a companion paper in The Astrophysical Journal Letters.