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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Jihad Report  May 13, 2017 - May 19, 2017 | | | Attacks | 53 | | Killed | 310 | | Injured | 242 | | Suicide Blasts | 12 | | Countries | 14 | |
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**Seth Rich Murder Finally Investigated?**

There is a difference between an unsolved murder and a murder that was never investigated in the first place. June 10th, on X-Squared Radio, I called out the DNC for assassinating one of its brightest young stars simply for trying to repair the corruption in the DNC. He was a Bernie supporter who saw the bribery, collusion, and corruption from the Clinton Crime Syndicate as they laughed at Bernie’s voters while super delegates kissed Hillary’s ring. Seth wanted to make a difference and try to save the Democrat Party from being swallowed by the largest and richest organized crime family in history. He worked long hours, and collected a massive file full of incriminating emails that he hand carried to an agent inside Wikileaks. Those emails were published as true and accurate.

In the wee hours of the Washington DC morning of June 10th, he was walking home when he was shot twice in the back and murdered on the sidewalk without witnesses. In classic execution style, he was unmolested and bled to death on the suburban sidewalk.

A top Democratic National Committee official has contacted Washington, D.C., police and the family of murdered DNC staffer Seth Rich demanding to know why a homicide detective is examining the unsolved case, a private investigator told WND Tuesday.



Detective Rod Wheeler

Detective Rod Wheeler, who started his investigation into Seth’s death in March, told WND he was stunned Monday when he learned from Rich’s family that the DNC contacted them about the case.

“How did that DNC person know I had called the police? That is what is baffling me,” Wheeler said. “I just found out from [Rich’s] family that the DNC knew I contacted the police – they hadn’t told me that all this time.”

After Wheeler went to the police for insight into Rich’s murder, the detective assigned to the investigation never replied to Wheeler’s inquiry.

“The family said, ‘Rod, there is something that you need to know,” Wheeler explained. “The police detective never called you back because the information was given to the DNC that you called the police trying to figure out what was going on.”

Wheeler, who began working as a homicide detective in 1989, said he is perturbed by the odd reaction the police have when he approaches them with questions about Rich.

Cops in Washington, D.C., he said, suspiciously respond to his inquiries about Rich’s murder with an ominous “blank stare.”

“It’s a blank stare – it’s scary,” he said. “I’m getting nothing from police, just nothing.”

A federal investigator, who remains anonymous, claims to have proof that Rich sent thousands of DNC emails to WikiLeaks. After learning about the investigator’s evidence, Wheeler notified Washington’s police chief in an attempt to inform law enforcement of the revelations before they became publicized by media.

But the response of the police chief – whom Wheeler knows well and characterized as a “very good guy” – unnerved the veteran homicide detective.

“I wanted to share what I heard with the chief and the senior officials at the police department because I knew Fox News was going to run this story, and I thought it was only fair that I tell the police what we got before this hits the media,” he said. “I shared it with the police last week. And you know what they said? Nothing. They didn’t say, ‘Rod, don’t go with it. Rod, let’s talk about it’ – blank stares.”

“I can’t figure it out,” he continued. “Typically, and what I was hoping, they’d say is, ‘Let us check into this before you go with the story’ and thank me for bringing them that information.”



Location listed on police report at intersection where DNC staffer Seth Rich was found ‘conscious and breathing with apparent gunshot wound(s) to the back’ on July 10, 2016 (Photo: Google Maps)



On Tuesday afternoon, Rich’s family repudiated the notion that the leaked DNC emails have anything to do with the reason the DNC staffer was killed. [Brad Bauman, a professional Democratic Party crisis public-relations consultant](https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/763852003093217280?lang=en) and the family’s spokesman, released a statement denying the report that Rich had been in contact with WikiLeaks. The statement condemned what the family sees as an attempt to politicize Rich’s death.

“We are a family who is committed to facts, not fake evidence that surfaces every few months to fill the void and distract law enforcement and the general public from finding Seth’s murderers,” the statement said. “The services of the private investigator who spoke to press was [sic] offered to the Rich family and paid for by a third party, and [Wheeler] contractually was barred from speaking to press or anyone outside of law enforcement or the family unless explicitly authorized by the family.”

In an interview with Business Insider, Bauman blasted the media for suggesting a DNC connection to Rich’s conspicuously timed death.

“It’s sad but unsurprising that a group of media outlets who have repeatedly lied to the American people would try and manipulate the legacy of a murder victim in order to forward their own political agenda,” Bauman said. “I think there is a special place in hell for people like that.”

Detective Wheeler said Rich’s parents seem genuinely concerned about finding out who murdered their son. However, he believes their disregard for the possibility that Rich’s death may be related to leaked emails and his line of work at the DNC is alarmingly conspicuous.

“Seth’s brother said to me, ‘Rod, we do not want you to look at this aspect of the emails.’ And I asked him, ‘Do you want the case solved? You cannot tell a detective, ‘Don’t look at certain things.’ [If] you want to solve the case, that detective is going to look at everything.”

Wheeler continued: “I don’t know the reason why they pushed back so much on the whole idea of the emails. I think they may think that if that information gets out, it may taint Seth’s legacy. I am just speculating. Why would they even care? As long as the bad guy is caught, does it matter how it happens?

“I don’t know what the reason is; it’s peculiar. If it were my loved one, I wouldn’t care about the legacy. Let’s catch the bad guy. We’ll worry about the legacy later.

**In turmoil**

At the time of the murder, the turmoil for the DNC was escalating.

[On July 5, 2016, then-FBI Director James Comey](http://www.latimes.com/politics/washington/la-na-essential-washington-updates-comey-emails-1494374889-htmlstory.html) held a news conference in which he blasted Clinton for her careless handling of national secrets while secretary of state.

Among other things, Comey said, “Although we did not find clear evidence that Secretary Clinton or her colleagues intended to violate laws governing the handling of classified information, there is evidence that they were extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive, highly classified information.”

And he said Clinton’s emails included seven message chains with information classified as top secret.

“None of these emails should have been on any kind of unclassified system,” he said.

He concluded, nevertheless, that “no reasonable prosecutor would bring such a case,” essentially stepping out of his role as an investigator and into the role of a prosecutor.

The announcement was only days after former President Bill Clinton met in private on an airport tarmac with then-Attorney General Loretta Lynch, who was Comey’s boss.

When news of the private meeting was revealed, Bill Clinton and Lynch insisted they talked only about personal matters, such as grandchildren, not the FBI investigation of Clinton’s wife, the former secretary of state, former first lady and front-runner for the Democratic Party presidential nomination.

It was at that time when, [under the administration of President Barack Obama,](http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2017/may/12/donald-trump/trump-calls-trump-russia-story-made-/) the FBI began a probe into claims of possible ties between the Trump campaign and Russia that included whether Russia hacked the DNC to benefit Trump.

The issue of emails exploded into the headlines when [a trove of nearly 20,000 messages was released shortly after Rich’s death.](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/07/22/on-eve-of-democratic-convention-wikileaks-releases-thousands-of-documents-about-clinton-the-campaign-and-internal-deliberations/?utm_term=.8fd23e2b45be)

The Washington Post said that provided “an embarrassing inside look at Democratic Party operations.”

Indeed, they included “discussions of Clinton’s chief rival for the presidential nomination, Sen. Bernie Sanders, D-Vt.; details of perks provided to party donors attending the convention, and email exchanges between party officials, journalists and others.”

Those caught in the discussions included DNC Communications Director Luis Miranda, National Finance Director Jordon Kaplan and Finance Chief of Staff Scott Comer .

The Washington Post at the time reported “Russian government hackers penetrated the computer network of the Democratic National Committee, gaining access to an entire database of opposition research.”

**Clinton defense ‘shredded’**

[The progressive-leaning Politifact](http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2016/jul/06/hillary-clinton/fbi-findings-tear-holes-hillary-clintons-email-def/) concluded the email dump “shredded Clinton’s most oft-recited defense – that she never sent or received information marked classified.”

The group previously rated Clinton’s comments on the subject half-true.

“Now we know it’s just plain wrong.”

The organization also pointed out that although Clinton said she turned over all work-related emails to the State Department, she didn’t, as Comey reported FBI investigators uncovered “several thousand” work-related emails that she had not handed over.

No matter exactly what the American public knew about the scandals, or what they thought, the polls showed Trump climbing at that time.

And [one commentator said it was at that point the trouble for the Democrats became insurmountable.](https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2016/07/29/trump-polls-winning-clinton-democratic-convention-speech-column/87700524/)

David Mastio, deputy editorial page editor of USA Today, wrote at the time: “The election is still 102 days away. Clinton’s historic candidacy has a special appeal to the smarter half of the American electorate, and it is backed by both of America’s first black presidents. The Clinton machine features such finely tuned fundraising machinery that Tesla engineers turn greener at the very sight. Its battle-hardened communications apparatus has already set records in selling high efficiency American-fueled natural gas furnaces to Saudi royalty.”

But he concluded Trump would be president because “every time a Clintonite attacks Trump it is getting hard not to giggle, or at least titter.”

“Before the convention, Hillary Clinton herself launched an attack on Trump that blew past titters and giggles and straight into guffaw territory. Trump is terrifying enough with the power of social media, she intoned, but ‘imagine if he had not just Twitter and cable news to go after his critics and opponents, but also the IRS.'”

But Mastio pointed out: “Yes, imagine a president who would abuse the powers of the IRS. Not to paint Clinton with the unfair and overbroad brush of guilt by association, but the administration in which she served as secretary of state, twice, accidentally, released the private taxpayer information of its political opponents at moments that, perhaps inadvertently, were politically damaging. And then there was the ‘targeting’ of the administration’s Tea Party opponents by the Obama administration IRS while Clinton was coincidentally serving as secretary of state. For non-political reasons no doubt, the Obama administration is still fighting in court to keep the full details of those events from the public eye.”

[The DNC also was handing out bonuses to staff members](http://fox43.com/2017/05/15/gov-wolf-questions-why-2016-dnc-grant-money-surplus-wasnt-returned-to-taxpayers/) instead of returning taxpayer-funded grants for the DNC hosting committee to taxpayers.

At the Democratic convention, Clinton won the nomination with less than 60 percent of the vote. Sen. Sanders got the rest.

The emails even disrupted the celebratory events, with revelations that the party was actively favoring Clinton over Sanders.

The email revelations led to the resignation of the DNC’s chairwoman, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, just before the convention.

**FBI interview**

Also that same month, [Clinton met with the FBI for an interview](http://www.cnn.com/2016/10/28/politics/hillary-clinton-email-timeline/) as part of the investigation into her use of a private email server while leading the State Department.

Lynch made clear there would be no charges against Clinton for her use of a personal email server.

House Speaker Paul Ryan also asked Director of National Intelligence James Clapper to deny Clinton access to any classified information for the rest of the 2016 campaign, CNN reported.

[Peter Schweizer of the Government Accountability Institute](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/07/hillary-clinton-missing-emails-secretary-state-department-personal-server-investigation-fbi-214016) wrote at that time that Clinton had signed affirmations declaring “she had turned over all of her work-related emails.”

“We now know that is not true.”

He also pointed out anomalies in Clinton’s emails.

“The email traffic for the secretary of state seems for the most part to be event-driven. For example, during Moammar Gadhafi’s removal from power in Libya, on Aug. 22, 2011, Clinton received 133 work-related emails, way more than average.”

During times with few events, the traffic declined.

“But then there is an instance where the State Department cable traffic rises and there are few if any Clinton corresponding emails. It’s the case of Rosatom, the Russian State Nuclear Agency: Clinton and senior officials at the State Department received dozens of cables on the subject of Rosatom’s activities around the world, including a hair-raising cable about Russian efforts to dominate the uranium market. As secretary of state, Clinton was a central player in a variety of diplomatic initiatives involving Rosatom officials. But strangely, there is only one email that mentions Rosatom in Clinton’s entire collection, an innocuous email about Rosatom’s activities in Ecuador. To put that into perspective, there are more mentions of LeBron James, yoga and NBC’s Saturday Night Live than the Russian Nuclear Agency in Clinton’s emails deemed ‘official.’

“Remember that a major deal involving Rosatom that was of vital concern to Clinton Foundation donors went down in 2009 and 2010. Rosatom bought a small Canadian uranium company owned by nine investors who were or became major Clinton Foundation donors, sending $145 million in contributions. The Rosatom deal required approval from several departments, including the State Department,” he noted.

Also during that month of July, [Trump picked Indiana Gov. Mike Pence](http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/14/politics/donald-trump-vice-presidential-choice/) as his running mate in an effort to lock up the party’s conservative base.

The newest twist in the Rich story came Monday when investigator Rod Wheeler, a former D.C. police homicide detective who was hired by the Rich family, [told Fox 5](http://www.fox5dc.com/news/local-news/254852337-story) in Washington, D.C., Rich’s laptop had evidence indicating he had been in contact WikiLeaks.

“Now, questions have been raised on why D.C. police, the lead agency on this murder investigation for the past ten months, have insisted this was a robbery gone bad when there appears to be no evidence to suggest that,” the news station reported.

**Mueller May be Clinton Crime Syndicate’s Worst Nightmare**

If Robert Mueller ignores the political rhetoric that's been spewed by members of Congress on both sides of the aisle and focuses strictly on the law and his mandate, then several members of President Obama's administration could ultimately be targeted in this inquiry.

The former FBI director has been hired to conduct an investigation regarding any links or coordination between the Russian government and President Donald Trump’s campaign.

Consider the implications of the Democrats' accusations against Trump, and against the Russians for hacking into the Democratic national Committee emails. These emails will become a focal point for Mueller's investigators. So too will the murder of Seth Rich, The Democratic National Committee staffer or who was killed in July 2016 in what police suspect was a botched robbery. There is evidence that he may have been passing information to Wikileaks.

The Democrats have used this Trump/Russia connection to fuel this political war — and as the president himself recently called it, a "witch hunt" — for the past five months and I anticipate they wanted to use it right up until the midterm elections so that they could sit back and claim the president and Republican members of Congress got nothing accomplished in the first two years of his presidency. I now believe that's going to come to an end.

Congress' failed inquiries and politically motivated leaks to the press will now take a second seat to Director Mueller and his investigative team which has full criminal grand jury subpoena power. Mueller's investigation takes precedent over these ridiculous congressional hearings that have accomplished absolutely nothing, apart from driving a frantic media, rumors, and political innuendo.

We already know that former national security advisor Mike Flynn spoke to a Russian counterpart. Had he said something inappropriate, or criminal, we would've known that by now for sure.

What we don't know, but will now find out, is who ordered the unmasking of Americans in conversations with foreign diplomats. Who leaked those names, and the content of those conversations to the press and media? Who in the Department of Justice told the New York Times that FBI director James Comey wrote a classified memo documenting a meeting with the president?

If the memo was actually classified and does exist, who leaked it? If Comey was ordered to obstruct a federal investigation as the New York Times has reported, that would be a federal crime, which Comey was obligated by law to report to the deputy attorney general. His failure to report, is not only a violation of law, but also jeopardizes his law license.

These are just a few things that Mueller and his investigative team will be looking at, and I'm sure there is much much more.

Who knows where this will go, but one thing is for sure: Donald Trump, Mike Flynn, are going to be looked at, but so will a bunch of others. And based on what's been reported already, we know that some of these others engaged in criminal conduct. It would be interesting to find out why the prior administration allowed them to engage in this activity, why the former Attorney General did nothing, and why Director Comey, intentionally ignored their crimes.

Hopefully we find out sooner than later. It's time for the president to get on to the job he was sworn to do.

**Trump’s Speech in Saudi Arabia**

US President Donald Trump on Sunday delivered a speech to the leaders of more than 50 Muslim countries to outline his vision for US-Muslim relations.

Here is a complete transcript of his remarks.

"I want to thank King Salman for his extraordinary words, and the magnificent Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting today's summit. I am honored to be received by such gracious hosts. I have always heard about the splendor of your country and the kindness of your citizens, but words do not do justice to the grandeur of this remarkable place and the incredible hospitality you have shown us from the moment we arrived.

You also hosted me in the treasured home of King Abdulaziz, the founder of the Kingdom who united your great people. Working alongside another beloved leader -- American President Franklin Roosevelt -- King Abdulaziz began the enduring partnership between our two countries. King Salman: your father would be so proud to see that you are continuing his legacy -- and just as he opened the first chapter in our partnership, today we begin a new chapter that will bring lasting benefits to our citizens.

Let me now also extend my deep and heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of the distinguished heads of state who made this journey here today. You greatly honor us with your presence, and I send the warmest regards from my country to yours. I know that our time together will bring many blessings to both your people and mine.

I stand before you as a representative of the American People, to deliver a message of friendship and hope. That is why I chose to make my first foreign visit a trip to the heart of the Muslim world, to the nation that serves as custodian of the two holiest sites in the Islamic Faith.

In my inaugural address to the American People, I pledged to strengthen America's oldest friendships, and to build new partnerships in pursuit of peace. I also promised that America will not seek to impose our way of life on others, but to outstretch our hands in the spirit of cooperation and trust.

Our vision is one of peace, security, and prosperity—in this region, and in the world.

Our goal is a coalition of nations who share the aim of stamping out extremism and providing our children a hopeful future that does honor to God.

And so this historic and unprecedented gathering of leaders—unique in the history of nations—is a symbol to the world of our shared resolve and our mutual respect. To the leaders and citizens of every country assembled here today, I want you to know that the United States is eager to form closer bonds of friendship, security, culture and commerce.

For Americans, this is an exciting time. A new spirit of optimism is sweeping our country: in just a few months, we have created almost a million new jobs, added over 3 trillion dollars of new value, lifted the burdens on American industry, and made record investments in our military that will protect the safety of our people and enhance the security of our wonderful friends and allies -- many of whom are here today.

Now, there is even more blessed news I am pleased to share with you. My meetings with King Salman, the Crown Prince, and the Deputy Crown Prince, have been filled with great warmth, good will, and tremendous cooperation. Yesterday, we signed historic agreements with the Kingdom that will invest almost $400 billion in our two countries and create many thousands of jobs in America and Saudi Arabia.

This landmark agreement includes the announcement of a $110 billion Saudi-funded defense purchase -- and we will be sure to help our Saudi friends to get a good deal from our great American defense companies. This agreement will help the Saudi military to take a greater role in security operations.

We have also started discussions with many of the countries present today on strengthening partnerships, and forming new ones, to advance security and stability across the Middle East and beyond.

Later today, we will make history again with the opening of a new Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology -- located right here, in this central part of the Islamic World.

This groundbreaking new center represents a clear declaration that Muslim-majority countries must take the lead in combating radicalization, and I want to express our gratitude to King Salman for this strong demonstration of leadership.

I have had the pleasure of welcoming several of the leaders present today to the White House, and I look forward to working with all of you.

America is a sovereign nation and our first priority is always the safety and security of our citizens. We are not here to lecture—we are not here to tell other people how to live, what to do, who to be, or how to worship. Instead, we are here to offer partnership -- based on shared interests and values -- to pursue a better future for us all.

Here at this summit we will discuss many interests we share together. But above all we must be united in pursuing the one goal that transcends every other consideration. That goal is to meet history's great test—to conquer extremism and vanquish the forces of terrorism.

Young Muslim boys and girls should be able to grow up free from fear, safe from violence, and innocent of hatred. And young Muslim men and women should have the chance to build a new era of prosperity for themselves and their peoples.

With God's help, this summit will mark the beginning of the end for those who practice terror and spread its vile creed. At the same time, we pray this special gathering may someday be remembered as the beginning of peace in the Middle East -- and maybe, even all over the world.

But this future can only be achieved through defeating terrorism and the ideology that drives it.

Few nations have been spared its violent reach.

America has suffered repeated barbaric attacks -- from the atrocities of September 11th to the devastation of the Boston Bombing, to the horrible killings in San Bernardino and Orlando.

The nations of Europe have also endured unspeakable horror. So too have the nations of Africa and even South America. India, Russia, China and Australia have been victims.

But, in sheer numbers, the deadliest toll has been exacted on the innocent people of Arab, Muslim and Middle Eastern nations. They have borne the brunt of the killings and the worst of the destruction in this wave of fanatical violence.

Some estimates hold that more than 95 percent of the victims of terrorism are themselves Muslim.

We now face a humanitarian and security disaster in this region that is spreading across the planet. It is a tragedy of epic proportions. No description of the suffering and depravity can begin to capture its full measure.

The true toll of ISIS, al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas, and so many others, must be counted not only in the number of dead. It must also be counted in generations of vanished dreams.

The Middle East is rich with natural beauty, vibrant cultures, and massive amounts of historic treasures. It should increasingly become one of the great global centers of commerce and opportunity.

This region should not be a place from which refugees flee, but to which newcomers flock.

Saudi Arabia is home to the holiest sites in one of the world's great faiths. Each year millions of Muslims come from around the world to Saudi Arabia to take part in the Hajj. In addition to ancient wonders, this country is also home to modern ones—including soaring achievements in architecture.

Egypt was a thriving center of learning and achievement thousands of years before other parts of the world. The wonders of Giza, Luxor and Alexandria are proud monuments to that ancient heritage.

All over the world, people dream of walking through the ruins of Petra in Jordan. Iraq was the cradle of civilization and is a land of natural beauty. And the United Arab Emirates has reached incredible heights with glass and steel, and turned earth and water into spectacular works of art.

The entire region is at the center of the key shipping lanes of the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Straits of Hormuz. The potential of this region has never been greater. 65 percent of its population is under the age of 30. Like all young men and women, they seek great futures to build, great national projects to join, and a place for their families to call home.

But this untapped potential, this tremendous cause for optimism, is held at bay by bloodshed and terror. There can be no coexistence with this violence. There can be no tolerating it, no accepting it, no excusing it, and no ignoring it.

Every time a terrorist murders an innocent person, and falsely invokes the name of God, it should be an insult to every person of faith.

Terrorists do not worship God, they worship death.

If we do not act against this organized terror, then we know what will happen. Terrorism's devastation of life will continue to spread. Peaceful societies will become engulfed by violence. And the futures of many generations will be sadly squandered.

If we do not stand in uniform condemnation of this killing—then not only will we be judged by our people, not only will we be judged by history, but we will be judged by God.

This is not a battle between different faiths, different sects, or different civilizations.

This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people of all religions who seek to protect it.

This is a battle between Good and Evil.

When we see the scenes of destruction in the wake of terror, we see no signs that those murdered were Jewish or Christian, Shia or Sunni. When we look upon the streams of innocent blood soaked into the ancient ground, we cannot see the faith or sect or tribe of the victims -- we see only that they were Children of God whose deaths are an insult to all that is holy.

But we can only overcome this evil if the forces of good are united and strong -- and if everyone in this room does their fair share and fulfills their part of the burden.

Terrorism has spread across the world. But the path to peace begins right here, on this ancient soil, in this sacred land.

America is prepared to stand with you -- in pursuit of shared interests and common security.

But the nations of the Middle East cannot wait for American power to crush this enemy for them. The nations of the Middle East will have to decide what kind of future they want for themselves, for their countries, and for their children.

It is a choice between two futures -- and it is a choice America CANNOT make for you.

A better future is only possible if your nations drive out the terrorists and extremists. Drive. Them. Out.

DRIVE THEM OUT of your places of worship.

DRIVE THEM OUT of your communities.

DRIVE THEM OUT of your holy land, and

DRIVE THEM OUT OF THIS EARTH.

For our part, America is committed to adjusting our strategies to meet evolving threats and new facts. We will discard those strategies that have not worked—and will apply new approaches informed by experience and judgment. We are adopting a Principled Realism, rooted in common values and shared interests.

Our friends will never question our support, and our enemies will never doubt our determination. Our partnerships will advance security through stability, not through radical disruption. We will make decisions based on real-world outcomes -- not inflexible ideology. We will be guided by the lessons of experience, not the confines of rigid thinking. And, wherever possible, we will seek gradual reforms -- not sudden intervention.

We must seek partners, not perfection—and to make allies of all who share our goals.

Above all, America seeks peace -- not war.

Muslim nations must be willing to take on the burden, if we are going to defeat terrorism and send its wicked ideology into oblivion.

The first task in this joint effort is for your nations to deny all territory to the foot soldiers of evil. Every country in the region has an absolute duty to ensure that terrorists find no sanctuary on their soil.

Many are already making significant contributions to regional security: Jordanian pilots are crucial partners against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Saudi Arabia and a regional coalition have taken strong action against Houthi militants in Yemen. The Lebanese Army is hunting ISIS operatives who try to infiltrate their territory. Emirati troops are supporting our Afghan partners. In Mosul, American troops are supporting Kurds, Sunnis and Shias fighting together for their homeland. Qatar, which hosts the U.S. Central Command, is a crucial strategic partner. Our longstanding partnership with Kuwait and Bahrain continue to enhance security in the region. And courageous Afghan soldiers are making tremendous sacrifices in the fight against the Taliban, and others, in the fight for their country.

As we deny terrorist organizations control of territory and populations, we must also strip them of their access to funds. We must cut off the financial channels that let ISIS sell oil, let extremists pay their fighters, and help terrorists smuggle their reinforcements.

I am proud to announce that the nations here today will be signing an agreement to prevent the financing of terrorism, called the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center -- co-chaired by the United States and Saudi Arabia, and joined by every member of the Gulf Cooperation Council. It is another historic step in a day that will be long remembered.

I also applaud the Gulf Cooperation Council for blocking funders from using their countries as a financial base for terror, and designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization last year. Saudi Arabia also joined us this week in placing sanctions on one of the most senior leaders of Hezbollah.

Of course, there is still much work to do.

That means honestly confronting the crisis of Islamist extremism and the Islamist terror groups it inspires. And it means standing together against the murder of innocent Muslims, the oppression of women, the persecution of Jews, and the slaughter of Christians.

Religious leaders must make this absolutely clear: Barbarism will deliver you no glory -- piety to evil will bring you no dignity. If you choose the path of terror, your life will be empty, your life will be brief, and YOUR SOUL WILL BE CONDEMNED.

And political leaders must speak out to affirm the same idea: heroes don't kill innocents; they save them. Many nations here today have taken important steps to raise up that message. Saudi Arabia's Vision for 2030 is an important and encouraging statement of tolerance, respect, empowering women, and economic development.

The United Arab Emirates has also engaged in the battle for hearts and souls—and with the U.S., launched a center to counter the online spread of hate. Bahrain too is working to undermine recruitment and radicalism.

I also applaud Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon for their role in hosting refugees. The surge of migrants and refugees leaving the Middle East depletes the human capital needed to build stable societies and economies. Instead of depriving this region of so much human potential, Middle Eastern countries can give young people hope for a brighter future in their home nations and regions.

That means promoting the aspirations and dreams of all citizens who seek a better life -- including women, children, and followers of all faiths. Numerous Arab and Islamic scholars have eloquently argued that protecting equality strengthens Arab and Muslim communities.

For many centuries the Middle East has been home to Christians, Muslims and Jews living side-by-side. We must practice tolerance and respect for each other once again—and make this region a place where every man and woman, no matter their faith or ethnicity, can enjoy a life of dignity and hope.

In that spirit, after concluding my visit in Riyadh, I will travel to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and then to the Vatican -- visiting many of the holiest places in the three Abrahamic Faiths. If these three faiths can join together in cooperation, then peace in this world is possible -- including peace between Israelis and Palestinians. I will be meeting with both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Starving terrorists of their territory, their funding, and the false allure of their craven ideology, will be the basis for defeating them.

But no discussion of stamping out this threat would be complete without mentioning the government that gives terrorists all three—safe harbor, financial backing, and the social standing needed for recruitment. It is a regime that is responsible for so much instability in the region. I am speaking of course of Iran.

From Lebanon to Iraq to Yemen, Iran funds, arms, and trains terrorists, militias, and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos across the region. For decades, Iran has fueled the fires of sectarian conflict and terror.

It is a government that speaks openly of mass murder, vowing the destruction of Israel, death to America, and ruin for many leaders and nations in this room.

Among Iran's most tragic and destabilizing interventions have been in Syria. Bolstered by Iran, Assad has committed unspeakable crimes, and the United States has taken firm action in response to the use of banned chemical weapons by the Assad Regime -- launching 59 tomahawk missiles at the Syrian air base from where that murderous attack originated.

Responsible nations must work together to end the humanitarian crisis in Syria, eradicate ISIS, and restore stability to the region. The Iranian regime's longest-suffering victims are its own people. Iran has a rich history and culture, but the people of Iran have endured hardship and despair under their leaders' reckless pursuit of conflict and terror.

Until the Iranian regime is willing to be a partner for peace, all nations of conscience must work together to isolate Iran, deny it funding for terrorism, and pray for the day when the Iranian people have the just and righteous government they deserve.

The decisions we make will affect countless lives.

King Salman, I thank you for the creation of this great moment in history, and for your massive investment in America, its industry and its jobs. I also thank you for investing in the future of this part of the world.

This fertile region has all the ingredients for extraordinary success -- a rich history and culture, a young and vibrant people, a thriving spirit of enterprise. But you can only unlock this future if the citizens of the Middle East are freed from extremism, terror and violence.

We in this room are the leaders of our peoples. They look to us for answers, and for action. And when we look back at their faces, behind every pair of eyes is a soul that yearns for justice.

Today, billions of faces are now looking at us, waiting for us to act on the great question of our time.

Will we be indifferent in the presence of evil? Will we protect our citizens from its violent ideology? Will we let its venom spread through our societies? Will we let it destroy the most holy sites on earth? If we do not confront this deadly terror, we know what the future will bring—more suffering and despair. But if we act—if we leave this magnificent room unified and determined to do what it takes to destroy the terror that threatens the world—then there is no limit to the great future our citizens will have.

The birthplace of civilization is waiting to begin a new renaissance. Just imagine what tomorrow could bring.

Glorious wonders of science, art, medicine and commerce to inspire humankind. Great cities built on the ruins of shattered towns. New jobs and industries that will lift up millions of people. Parents who no longer worry for their children, families who no longer mourn for their loved ones, and the faithful who finally worship without fear.

These are the blessings of prosperity and peace. These are the desires that burn with a righteous flame in every human heart. And these are the just demands of our beloved peoples.

I ask you to join me, to join together, to work together, and to FIGHT together— BECAUSE UNITED, WE WILL NOT FAIL.

Thank you. God Bless You. God Bless Your Countries. And God Bless the United States of America."

**The Globalists Attempt to Crash the World to Stop Trump**

The Dow Jones Industrial Average tumbled more than 370 points, Treasuries rallied the most since July and volatility spiked higher as the turmoil surrounding the Trump administration roiled financial markets around the globe.

Major U.S. stock indexes had the worst session in eight months, while the CBOE Volatility Index jumped the most since the U.K. voted to leave the European Union last June, shattering the calm that gripped markets in the past month as the crisis threatened to derail the policy agenda that helped push equities to records as recently as Monday.

The 10-year Treasury yield sank to 2.22 percent in its steepest decline since July. The spread between 10-year and two-year yields narrowed to the flattest since before Trump’s election. The dollar weakened to a level last seen in November. Emerging-market equities halted a seven-day rally. Gold futures extended a rally to six days.

“What has been setting in over the course of the day is that political uncertainty is something that’s likely going to be with us for a significant amount of time,” said Dennis Debusschere, Evercore ISI’s head of portfolio strategy and quant. “We may be looking at a higher volatility backdrop with a trending lower market for the next couple of months.”

Wall Street finally took notice of political wrangling in Washington as investors began to question the Trump administration’s ability to focus on policy as it careens from one crisis to another. Many of the trades sparked by the president’s shock election have reversed in recent days, with the dollar all but erasing its post-election rally. The S&P 500 Index remains 10 percent higher since then, but stocks most sensitive to Trump policy prescriptions have begun to wobble.

“If he’s preoccupied defending himself and if it goes a lot further, then any hope of his legislative agenda coming to the fore is going to be reduced,” John Stopford, the London-based head of fixed-income at Investec Asset Management Ltd., said in an interview with Bloomberg TV. “Clearly at the margin it’s a negative. At the moment there’s a classic environment for yields to rally a bit further and for the dollar to sell off.”

**Here are some key events coming up:**

OPEC’s internal Economic Commission Board meets in Vienna to discuss the market in preparation for the group’s formal meeting on May 25. Data from Japan on Thursday will likely show the economy accelerated in the first three months of the year, posting a fifth straight quarter of expansion. That would be the longest consecutive period of growth since 2005-2006.

**Here are the main moves in markets:**

**Stocks**

The S&P 500 Index fell 1.8 percent to 2,357.25 at 4 p.m. in New York, its worst day since Sept. 9. The measure touched an all-time high Tuesday. The Dow average lost 372.82 points, the most in eight months, while the Nasdaq Composite Index plunged 2.6 percent for its steepest drop since June 24. Bank shares led the retreat with a 3 percent slide, the most since June 24. Real-estate and utilities were the only of 11 groups in the S&P 500 to advance. The Stoxx Europe 600 Index fell 1.2 percent, after ending little changed in the previous session. The MSCI All-Country World Index lost 1.2 percent from a record, with banks having the biggest impact across all regions. It was the worst day in eight months. MSCI’s emerging-market index retreated for the first time in eight sessions, sliding 0.6 percent.

**Currencies**

The Bloomberg Dollar Spot Index dropped 0.5 percent, trading at the lowest level since Nov. 8. The yen rose 1.9 percent to 110.95 per dollar, after climbing 0.6 percent on Tuesday. The euro added 0.6 percent to $1.1152, extending Tuesday’s 1 percent surge and heading for the highest since Nov. 4.

**Bonds**

The yield on 10-year Treasuries dropped 11 basis points to 2.22 percent, the lowest since April 19.  Odds of a June Fed rate hike settled around 60 percent, while full pricing of next hike shifted to November from September, per Fed-dated OIS rates. Benchmark yields in France lost six basis points to 0.83 percent, while those in Germany declined six basis points to 0.378 percent.

**Commodities**

Gold for immediate deliver climbed a sixth straight day in the longest run in a month. Spot prices added as much as 1.9 percent to a two-week high of $1,260.38 an ounce. Futures advanced a sixth straight day. Crude futures added 0.8 percent to settle at $49.07 a barrel in New York. Markets are getting some encouragement from the U.S. as supplies fell for a sixth week -- a sign that OPEC-led production curbs are starting to be felt in the world’s biggest oil-consuming nation.

**Jack Welch Urges Trump to Go to War with Deep State**

**Jack Welch, the former chief executive of General Electric, thinks Donald Trump is not being ruthless enough with the bureaucracy in Washington, D.C.**

“I think he was an entrepreneur who ran his own shop and he never ran a bureaucracy,” [Welch said](http://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/17/jack-welch-impeachment-of-trump-would-blow-the-market-away.html) on CNBC’s Squawk Box.  “It was a family business, which he ran beautifully. He was successful. But you can’t keep doing that.”

Welch advised the president to get more aggressive with the Deep State government bureaucrats whose leaks have triggered much of the chaos now engulfing the White House.

“If you run a bureaucracy, they’re in the weeds, they’re behind the desk, they’re whispering around the water-cooler. You’ve got to nail them and get them the hell out of there,” Welch said.

Welch said he’s a supporter of the president’s agenda but a critic of his management skills. The handling of James Comey, Welch said, was a rookie mistake. Given Trump’s earlier praise of the former FBI director, calling Comey incompetent was a mistake. Instead, the president should have praised Comey even as he fired him,

“I think without question we have a guy that on the right agenda with crappy management practices,” Welch said.

If he had to give a grade to Trump’s management skills, Welsch said he’d give Trump a “D minus.”

“And I’m an easy grader,” Welch said.

Welch said he would Trump straight As on boosting morale of business owners, on picking members of his cabinet and on his Supreme Court pick.

Welch also warned that an impeachment of President Donald Trump would trigger a huge market sell-off.

“An impeachment proceeding would blow the market away,” [Welch said](http://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/17/jack-welch-impeachment-of-trump-would-blow-the-market-away.html).

**Space Wars**

## WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Air Force considers “maintaining space superiority” one of its “core missions,” high-ranking American military officials told lawmakers Wednesday, warning that “space is now a warfighting domain.”

In jointly written [testimony](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Wilson-Goldfein-Raymond-Greaves_05-17-17.pdf) submitted to the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces Wednesday, top officials in charge of America’s military space program told [lawmakers](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/hearings/17-05-17-military-space-organization-policy-and-programs):

For decades the United States has enjoyed unimpeded freedom of action in space. This benign environment allowed us to operate satellites for intelligence collection, missile warning, weather monitoring, communications, and precision positioning, navigation, and timing in support of all military operations for all of the services, without thinking about how to protect these systems. That environment no longer exists. Space will be contested in any conflict…

Clearly, freedom to operate in space is not guaranteed. In fact, space is now a warfighting domain, similar to the more familiar air, land, and maritime domains our men and women are fighting in today. We must ensure the reliability of our current systems and we must modernize. Our modernization will focus on our ability to deter potential adversaries, and to fight in a contested, degraded, and operationally limited environment should deterrence fail.

The warnings came from Heather Wilson, secretary of the U.S. Air Force; Gen. David Goldfein, chief of staff of the Air Force; Gen. John Raymond, commander of U.S. Air Force Space Command; and Lt. Gen. Samuel Greaves, commander of the U.S. Air Force Command’s Space and Missile System Center.

“Our potential adversaries understand the advantage we derive from space and view our reliance on space as a vulnerability they can exploit,” they noted. “Near-peer competitors will offset any U.S. military advantage derived from our space systems and continue to pursue capabilities to degrade or destroy them.”

In its latest World Threat [Assessment](https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Testimonies/SSCI%20Unclassified%20SFR%20-%20Final.pdf), issued last week, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats identified Russia and China as America’s primary rivals in space.

“We assess that Russia and China perceive a need to offset any US military advantage derived from military, civil, or commercial space systems and are increasingly considering attacks against satellite systems as part of their future warfare doctrine,” pointed out the assessment. “Both will continue to pursue a full range of anti- satellite (ASAT) weapons as a means to reduce US military effectiveness.”

“The global threat of electronic warfare (EW) attacks against space systems will expand in the coming years in both number and types of weapons,” adds the DNI. “Development will very likely focus on jamming capabilities against dedicated military satellite communications (SATCOM), Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) imaging satellites, and enhanced capabilities against Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), such as the US Global Positioning System (GPS). Blending of EW and cyber-attack capabilities will likely expand in pursuit of sophisticated means to deny and degrade information networks.”

Russia and China will likely “complete development” of “ASAT weapons” in the next few years, states the assessment.

DNI coats warns, “Russia is developing an airborne laser weapon for use against US satellites. Russia and China continue to conduct sophisticated on-orbit satellite activities, such as rendezvous and proximity operations, at least some of which are likely intended to test dual-use technologies with inherent counterspace functionality.”

For operation and maintenance of space programs alone, the Pentagon has [requested](http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2017/marchAmendment/fy2017_o1a.pdf) nearly a billion dollars for fiscal year 2017 (October 1, 2016 thru September 30, 2017) that does not include hundreds of [millions](http://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2017/) for procurement as well as research and development programs.

“Maintaining Space Superiority (freedom from attack and the freedom to maneuver and attack) is a core USAF mission. It is not just operationally important, it is also a strategic imperative for protecting U.S. and allied capabilities throughout a crisis or conflict,” the high-ranking military officials told senators.

“The Air Force is the lead service for space. Our space systems, including our ground elements, could be the first system attacked in a high-end fight. We are committed to gaining a full understanding of space operations in a contested environment,” they continued.

The U.S. military acknowledges its space policy is facing some challenges.

“In 2017, your Air Force will finalize our family of space warfighting Concepts of Operations, identify our capability gaps, continue our posture transition to increase deterrence, and ensure our force can fight and win a conflict that either starts or extends into space, and strengthen our support to Combatant Commanders,’” testified the officials.

“We are cognizant that the decisive advantage that space brings to military operations has been the deciding factor in every military operation conducted in recent years. Your Air Force remains committed to leading the space enterprise to ensure our joint warfighters can fight and win in every domain,” they added.

Maybe we should stop taking rides on the Russian Soyuz capsule. Oops, we can't because Obama killed the Space Program.

**Val Kilmer Will be Back**

## Val Kilmer credits love and his Christian Science faith for helping him successfully beat cancer.

Page Six [pointed out](http://pagesix.com/2017/05/17/val-kilmer-says-love-and-religion-helped-cure-his-cancer/) that in a [Reddit AMA on Tuesday](https://www.reddit.com/r/movies/comments/6bkcl7/hello_reddit_i_am_actor_and_artist_val_kilmer_i/dhnk1y3/?context=3), one user asked the actor and devout Christian Scientist: “What would you want fans to know about having, and beating, the Big C.?”

“I am very grateful for all the prayers and good thoughts from around the world,” the 57-year-old Heat star replied. “People that know I am a Christian Scientist make the assumption that I have somehow endangered myself. But many many people have been healed by prayer throughout recorded history. And many many people have died by whatever was modern medicine.”

Kilmer said that multiple doctors prayed for him while he was in the hospital and he even spoke to the inventor of the defibrillator, Dr. Bernard Lowen.

Kilmer recounted his conversation with Lowen, saying, “He started to weep without his voice wavering and he leaned into me and said, ‘Fluff their pillow. That what I tell all the interns. LOVE. Love heals. More than any other skills, I urge them to LOVE the life they are entrusted to save.’ Well that’s what is at the heart of Mrs. Eddy’s understanding of the teachings of Jesus.”

Kilmer revealed his battle with cancer in a previous Reddit AMA when one user asked him about actor Michael Douglas’ claim that he was battling a terminal form of the illness.

“He was probably trying to help me cause press probably asked where I was these days, and I did have a healing of cancer, but my tongue is still swollen altho healing all the time,” Kilmer replied then. “Because I don’t sound my normal self yet people think I may still be under the weather.”

**The Net Neutrality Myth**

A federal agency voted to kick off the repeal of "net neutrality" rules designed to keep broadband providers like AT&T, Verizon and Comcast from interfering with the internet.

It's the latest change that the Federal Communications Commission has made to ease regulation of the phone, broadcast and cable industries.

Undoing the net neutrality rules — which, for instance, block providers from favoring their own apps and services over those of competitors like Netflix — may be the biggest battle yet triggered by FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. The tech industry, which sees net neutrality as necessary to innovation, is already pushing back by lobbying politicians, sending letters of protest to the agency and starting to rally supporters.

The FCC's three commissioners voted 2-1, with the lone Democrat opposed, to start a process aimed at unwinding the net neutrality rules. It will be months before final rules are up for a vote.

**BATTLE OF THE INVESTMENT STUDIES**

Pai often argues that net neutrality rules are heavy handed and discourage broadband investment. His goal, he says, is to encourage companies to build out their wired and wireless broadband networks and draw more Americans online.

For support, Pai turns to a study by Hal Singer, a net-neutrality critic and economist who has worked as a telecom-industry consultant. Singer found that such infrastructure investment by network companies has declined 5.6 percent in 2016 from 2014. The telecom trade group USTelecom likewise says broadband investment is falling in the aftermath of the net neutrality rules.

Free Press, an advocacy group that supports net neutrality, has its own competing study showing broadband companies' infrastructure spending rose, and says USTelecom is wrong to exclude some spending by AT&T and Sprint. Pai on Thursday defended the analysis he relied on, saying it's the more accurate measure of investment in the U.S.

Industry analysts, however, say it's so far hard to say, and note that other factors also affect investment.

In June 2015, the Obama-era FCC decided to regulate broadband as a "Title II" service — putting it, like phone service, under stricter government oversight. That gave the FCC authority to enforce net neutrality rules. Companies worried that regime would make it easier to regulate the prices they charged for broadband.

"From where we sit, the overall level of investment in the business is still pretty strong," said Moody's Mark Stodden, who analyzes telecom companies like Verizon and AT&T. "I hear companies complaining about net neutrality and Title II, but I think it's a cop-out. I don't think they're actually spending less. They don't like it so they complain about it."

**RALLYING THE TROOPS**

Some net-neutrality supporters have already started to push back against the repeal effort. The Firefox browser has a call to action that goads users to "tell the FCC that you heart the open web!" and links to a site collecting signatures for a letter to Pai.

John Oliver, the HBO comedy-news host whose 2014 segment helped popularize net neutrality as an issue (nearly 4 million comments filed back in 2015), got into the mix again with another segment on May 7, urging viewers to tell the FCC to keep the net neutrality rules.

But the vitriol often unleashed by the internet is already leaking into this inter-industry tech-policy battle. The chairman and his staff have complained about mean or racist comments directed at Pai, who is Indian-American. Oliver even begged supporters to be civil in an online video posted Sunday.

There are also reports that many of the 2 million comments already filed to the FCC are fake. And the FCC said its site was attacked the night of Oliver's first segment, making it hard to leave a comment.

FCC officials have said, however, that it's not a numbers game, and they pay more attention the know-how of the person or group making the comment rather than how many are filed on each side.

**INDUSTRY COMFORT**

A preliminary version of Pai's proposals, released last month, raised concerns that the FCC would only repeal, but not replace, net neutrality protections. Thursday's proposal asked whether it's still necessary to bar internet providers from blocking or slowing down certain websites or apps, or from charging services like Netflix extra for access to consumers. (Pai said Thursday these sections are still in the proposal.)

Big broadband companies say they can be trusted to do what's right for their customers. Net-neutrality advocates cry foul; Free Press has a list of what it calls net-neutrality violations going back more than a decade.

"An open internet means that we do not block, throttle or otherwise impair your online activity," said a Wednesday ad in the Washington Post placed by the cable lobby, NCTA. "We firmly stand by that commitment because it is good for our customers and good for our business."

"Verizon supports net neutrality. Our customers demand it and our business depends on it," wrote Craig Silliman, Verizon's general counsel, in a post on LinkedIn. He also called for net-neutrality legislation from Congress.

In an April blog post, AT&T says it "has always supported our customers' right to an open internet — and the right to access the content, applications and devices of their choosing."

AT&T and industry trade groups sued the FCC over the 2015 rules; a federal appeals court upheld them in 2016 . Verizon sued over a previous attempt that was spiked in 2014 by a federal appeals court.

**The Russians are Coming**

Time magazine’s latest cover shows Russian onion domes taking over the White House in a reference to yet unproven ties between President Donald Trump and Russian leadership.

The cover is being seen as an attack against Trump for having close ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and possibly a reference to recent accusations that Trump disclosed classified information to Putin during a recent meeting.

Trump has denied revealing any classified information; the accusation came from an unnamed source and has not been substantiated.

Furthermore, Russian foreign officials have also denied that classified information was revealed.

The U.S. Justice Department has now appointed a special counsel, Robert Mueller, to investigate whether there was any interference by Russia in the 2016 U.S. election or collusion between Trump’s campaign and Russia. While Trump called the appointment part of “the single greatest witch hunt of a politician in American history” on Twitter, he also said in a statement on Wednesday that “a thorough investigation will confirm what we already know — there was no collusion between my campaign and any foreign entity.”

In Trump’s first few months as president, Time has featured several politically focused covers critical of him; on the other hand, it also named him its 2016 Person of the Year. Trump reportedly keeps a stack of Time magazines featuring him on the cover on his desk in Trump Tower, [**according to CNN Politics**](http://www.cnn.com/2017/05/18/politics/white-house-russia-time-cover/).

MAD Magazine weighed in with a side-by-side photo showing a Dec. 12, 2016 cover of their magazine remarkably similar to the Time cover, with onion domes covering the top of the White House, and accused Time of stealing their material.

Twitter has been skeptical of the magazine’s objectivity in light of the new cover, with some pointing out the apparent bias of the magazine and the fact that no proof has been given of the allegations so far. Another challenged journalists to ask Trump about the illustration.

**Criminal Corzine at it Again**

Jon S. Corzine, the embattled former MF Global Holdings Ltd. chief executive and ex-chairman of Goldman Sachs Group Inc., has discussed plans to start his own hedge fund in recent months, according to people familiar with the matter. **The fund would start with cash from Mr. Corzine’s personal wealth and a handful of outside investors.** Mr. Corzine said he had been speaking with about a half-dozen potential investors, and projected around $150 million in assets under management, one of the people said.

Would the fund invest all of its AUM in 2 year Italian bonds? While all answers would be revealed in due time, first Corzine has to get over that whole "criminal" stigma:

Mr. Corzine most likely wouldn’t be able to launch a fund until legal proceedings against him over MF Global have been resolved. Pretrial motions are expected to go at least until February of next year. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission in June 2013 filed civil charges against him and is still collecting evidence for a possible trial.

However:

**Mr. Corzine’s supporters point out that he hasn’t been criminally charged and that after MF Global collapsed, his bets on the bonds of Portugal, Italy and other European nations were ultimately proven on target**. Mr. Corzine’s supporters point out that he hasn’t been criminally charged and that after MF Global collapsed, his bets on the bonds of Portugal, Italy and other European nations were ultimately proven on target.

Yes they were, but in the interim MF Global went bankrupt, and Corzine was exposed as a ~~criminal~~ commingler. In any case, the second, 2015 attempt at starting his own hedge fund also led nowhere.



Corzine at a 2010 morning meeting at the headquarters of MF Global, just beforehe blew it up.

\* \* \*

**Now, nearly five years after his first attempt, it's time for try #3,** and [according to the NYT,](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/18/business/dealbook/jon-corzine-wall-street-comeback.html?smid=tw-nytimesbusiness&smtyp=cur) Corzine is - again - plotting his next and final act: "**starting a hedge fund. And not just any hedge fund, but one designed to take advantage of the turmoil in the Trump era.**"

On a recent afternoon [Corzine] he squeezed into a 100-square-foot office in the Flatiron district of Manhattan — no nameplate on the door — **where a pair of Bloomberg terminals consumed much of the space**. His eyes fixed on one, Mr. Corzine scribbled notes about his trades on a yellow legal pad as a computer chimed an imitation closing bell.

In the final seconds of trading, Mr. **Corzine watched as a tiny sliver of his day’s profits slipped away, prompting him to utter a profanity or two and grumble about not ending the afternoon on more of “a high note**.”

In other words, **Corzine wants to go down in a blaze of glory, trading the upcoming Trump crash.**

In his first interview since the MF Global meltdown, Corzine told the NYT his plans for a new hedge fund, saying that "he will seek to anticipate what often seems unpredictable: how the Trump administration and other world leaders will enact policy and, in turn, move markets."

One of his Trump trades, for example, is designed to pay off in the event of a broad decline in the stock market, not unlike what happened Wednesday when shares swooned on Trump-related worries.   On the bullish side, he hopes to ride a wave of a corporate-tax overhaul while trading in big tech, banking and industrial companies poised to gain from a policy shift.

Nothing groundshattering there, in fact even the 17-year-old "hedge funds managers" on Fin Twitter already have these trades on, so what makes Corzine's product offering unique?

Well, we couldn't quite answer that question. Neither apparently could the NYT.

Mr. Corzine would hardly be the only hedge fund manager seizing the moment in Washington. Some expect a correction in the stock market as investors come to terms with turmoil in the White House.

**Mr. Corzine worries that the administration will make “a serious foreign policy mistake,” he said, which would be “horrible for markets.”** He said that he planned to **place a major bet that the market would fall but added that, as an American, “I’m hoping that I’m wasting money.”**

Alas, with that "thesis" it's Corzine's LPs that will be thinking the same. That said, at least Corzine has a putch:

**“I think I can read between the lines more than a lot of people can on these issues,”** he said last month, on the eve of a trip to raise money for his fund with wealthy investors.

Maybe... except that one time in 2011. And yet, the third time may just be the charm for Corzine:

In the first few weeks of marketing**, Mr. Corzine has secured commitments and indications of interest in the tens of millions of dollars, according to a colleague who is helping him reach an initial goal of roughly $150 million.** At a time when the stars of the hedge fund world can raise billions of dollars in a matter of weeks, Mr. Corzine’s financial ambition is modest. The real test will come, he said, if after several months the fund can demonstrate healthy returns and expand to a broader base of investors.

But wait, there's more:

There are signs his pitch is resonating with some investors. After securing commitments from family and friends, he recently returned from a trip to the Middle East, where he met with a number of wealthy investors. He also plans to visit Latin America and Hong Kong.

When the fund-raising concludes, **Mr. Corzine hopes to have collected just shy of $150 million, the amount at which private funds must register with the Securities and Exchange Commission. That sum will include several million dollars of his own money.**

Indeed, there just may be a lot more dumb money out there than meets the eye.  On Friday, Corzine will appear at the SALT Conference in Las Vegas, the premier hedge fund schmooze-fest, where he will join Joseph R. Biden Jr., Ben Bernanke and the singer Jewel, as well as hundreds of fund managers and reporters, in an attempt to conclude his fundraising.

Jon, however, is probably unaware that in the 6 years since he was professionally trading, things have changed, and that any and all positions he puts on will be promptly sold to the exchanges' best clients: HFTs who who will seek to frontrun and scalp his limit orders, ram his stops and bleed his P&L to death on a daily basis. In fact, with only $150mm, we give Corzine 6 months before he is forced to shut. Again. That is after he steals all of his client’s money. Again.

Ann Barnhardt Audio

**Pardon Julian**

Sweden today announced it has decided to drop its investigation in rape allegations made against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in a move his lawyer described as a 'total victory'.

The dramatic decision was revealed by [**Sweden**](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/sweden/index.html)'s Director of Public Prosecution, Marianne Ny, who said the probe had been 'discontinued' having effectively become a lost cause.

The 45-year-old Australian, who denies the 2010 rape claims, has been living inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London for almost five years and has been granted political asylum.

The focus will now move to the governments of the UK and the US and whether Assange will attempt to fly to Ecuador to avoid extradition to America for trial over the leaking of hundreds of thousands of secret military and diplomatic documents.

Met Police today confirmed there is a warrant for his arrest for not appearing in court in 2012, and that it was 'obliged' to execute the warrant if he leaves the embassy.  But the offence is 'much less serious' than the sex crimes claims, and police 'will provide a level of resourcing which is proportionate to that offence,' the force said.

Moments after this morning's decision, he tweeted a picture of himself smiling. It was immediately retweeted by actress Pamela Anderson who has visited him at the embassy several times.



The 45-year-old Australian has been living inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London (pictured today) for almost five years and has been granted political asylum



+11

Investigators had today been expected to reveal whether they would lift a Europe-wide arrest warrant against him in a seven-year-old case

'The priority for the MPS must continue to be arresting those who are currently wanted in the Capital in connection with serious violent or sexual offences for the protection of Londoners.'

This morning WikiLeaks said the ball was now in Britain's court.

'UK refuses to confirm or deny whether it has already received a US extradition warrant for Julian Assange. Focus now moves to UK,' it said in a tweet. A lawyer on Assange's legal team, Per Samuelsson, told Swedish radio the decision was 'a total victory', saying that Assange was 'of course happy and relieved'. Samuelsson also said that the decision meant Assange 'is free to leave the embassy whenever he wants', though he later told the TT news agency that he did not know when Assange might leave.

'What I do know is that Sweden does not stop him from doing it. Sweden is out of the game,' he said.

Another lawyer, Christophe Marchand, told AFP that 'We have been waiting a long time for this decision'.

'Julian Assange has been a victim of a huge abuse of procedure. We are very pleased and very moved, as this marks the end of his nightmare.'

Assange's Swedish lawyer last month filed a new motion demanding that the arrest warrant be lifted after US Attorney General Jeff Sessions said in April that arresting Assange would be 'a priority'.

The focus will now move to the governments of the UK and the US and whether Assange will fly to Ecuador to avoid extradition to America. 'This implies that we can now demonstrate that the US has a will to take action... this is why we ask for the arrest warrant to be cancelled so that Julian Assange can fly to Ecuador and enjoy his political asylum,' lawyer Per Samuelsson told AFP at the time. The accusation against Assange dated from August 2010 when the alleged victim, who says she met him at a WikiLeaks conference in Stockholm a few days earlier, filed a complaint. She accused him of having sex with her as she slept without using a condom despite repeatedly having denied him unprotected sex.

'I am entirely innocent,' Assange wrote in a 19-page testimony released in December 2016.

He argues that the sex was consensual and has denounced the accusations as 'politically motivated'.

The investigation had suffered from multiple procedural complications since it began. The statute of limitations on the rape allegation expires in August 2020. In a letter sent to the Swedish government on May 8, Ecuador condemned 'the obvious lack of progress' in the investigation despite Assange's questioning in the presence of the Swedish prosecutor at the embassy in November 2016.

'It is extremely worrying that six months after the hearing at the Embassy of Ecuador in the United Kingdom, the Swedish prosecutor's office has not yet decided on the judicial situation of Julian Assange,' the Ecuadoran Foreign Ministry said in the letter seen by AFP.

Swedish judges have refused to take into account the opinion of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which in February 2016 said Assange was effectively 'arbitrarily detained' by Sweden and Britain and called for the arrest warrant to be annulled.

KEY DATES IN THE ASSANGE SAGA



A Swedish probe into a sex allegation against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been dropped. An investigation into a sex allegation against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been dropped by Sweden's Director of Public Prosecution. The development is the latest in a long-standing saga involving Mr Assange, who has been living inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London for almost five years. Here are the key dates in the case:

2010

August

An arrest warrant is issued for Mr Assange for two separate allegations - one of rape and one of molestation - after he visits Sweden. He is questioned by police in Stockholm and denies the allegations.

November

Stockholm District Court approves a request to detain the WikiLeaks founder for questioning on suspicion of rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion. An international arrest warrant is issued by Swedish police through Interpol.

December

Mr Assange presents himself to London police and appears at an extradition hearing where he is remanded in custody. At a later hearing he is granted conditional bail but is kept behind bars after Swedish authorities challenge the decision.

He is later granted conditional bail at the High Court in London after his supporters pay £240,000 in cash and sureties.

2011

February

District Judge Howard Riddle rules Mr Assange should be extradited to Sweden and denies this would breach his human rights. Mr Assange vows to fight the decision.

November

Mr Assange loses a High Court appeal against the decision to extradite him.

2012

May

The UK Supreme Court upholds the High Court decision in the case, ruling that extradition is lawful and can go ahead. The Supreme Court later rejects a move by Mr Assange to reopen his appeal against his extradition, saying it is 'without merit'.

June 19

Mr Assange enters the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, requesting political asylum. A day later, Scotland Yard confirms he will be subject to arrest for breaching his bail conditions.

The development is the latest in a long-standing saga involving Mr Assange, who has been living inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London for almost five years

August 19

Mr Assange makes his first public appearance in two months on the Ecuadorian Embassy's balcony and calls for the US government to 'renounce its witch-hunt' against WikiLeaks.

November

Ecuador's ambassador to the UK, Ana Alban, says Mr Assange is suffering a chronic lung condition after spending months inside a one-room office at the embassy. The Ecuadorian government later plays down the health fears and says Mr Assange 'does not have an urgent medical condition'.

December

Mr Assange marks the six-month anniversary inside the embassy by making another appearance on the balcony to say the 'door is open' for talks to break the deadlock over his campaign to avoid extradition to Sweden.

2013

June

Mr Assange tells a group of journalists he will not leave the embassy even if sex allegations against him are dropped, because he fears moves are already under way to extradite him to the United States.

2014

July

Mr Assange loses a legal bid to have an arrest warrant issued in Sweden against him cancelled. A judge in Stockholm decided to uphold the warrant against him for alleged sexual offences against two women.

August

Mr Assange tells a press conference he will be leaving the embassy soon following speculation that he is seeking hospital treatment for heart and lung problems. He later brushes off reports that he is about to give up his fight against extradition to Sweden.

September

On behalf of Mr Assange, his legal team submitted a complaint against Sweden and the United Kingdom to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention claiming his confinement in the embassy amounts to illegal detention.

November

Mr Assange loses a legal move in a Swedish appeal court aimed at revoking his arrest warrant.

December

Mr Assange appears on the embassy's balcony to greet Noam Chomsky, the US philosopher and activist. Hollywood actor John Cusack also visits the WikiLeaks founder later in the month.

Assange's lawyer described the decision as 'a total victory'. He has been in the Ecuadorian embassy for five years

2015

March

Swedish prosecutors ask to question Mr Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy.

June

Mr Assange claims the Swedish prosecutor has cancelled an appointment to interview him at the embassy.

August 13

Swedish prosecutors drop investigations into some of the sex allegations against Mr Assange due to time restrictions. The investigation into suspected rape remains active.

August 16

Foreign Office minister Hugo Swire said Ecuador's decision to harbour Mr Assange in its embassy had prevented the proper course of justice. He said the UK continued to have a legal obligation to extradite him to Sweden, where he remained suspected of a sexual offence.

August 21

Civil rights campaigner Jesse Jackson visits Mr Assange inside the embassy. Afterwards, he says: 'Eight hundred years after the Magna Carta, freedom of the press is right and detention without charges is wrong.'

October 12

Metropolitan Police end their 24-hour guard outside the Ecuadorian Embassy. It breaks a three-year police operation which is estimated to have cost more than £12 million.

2016

February 5

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention says Mr Assange is being 'arbitrarily detained' in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and calls on authorities to end his 'deprivation of liberty'.

The report is branded 'frankly ridiculous' by Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond - a response which Mr Assange described as 'insulting'.

February 9

Swedish prosecutors say they are working on a renewed request to interview Mr Assange at the embassy.

February 22

Lawyers for Mr Assange submit papers to a Swedish court, asking for his arrest warrant to be overturned.

March 24

The Government formally asks a UN Working Group to review its finding that Mr Assange was subject to arbitrary detention, saying the opinion was 'deeply flawed'.

March 25

A Swedish court refuses to drop an arrest warrant against Mr Assange.

June 20

Ecuador reveals it has received a formal request from the Swedish authorities to interview Mr Assange.

August 9

Mr Assange files an appeal at Sweden's Court of Appeal of Svea, arguing the country must comply with the UN working group's findings that his deprivation of liberty was unlawful.

August 11

Ecuador announces that Mr Assange will be questioned by Swedish prosecutors in the embassy in London.

September 16

Sweden's Court of Appeal rejects a bid by Mr Assange to have his sex assault warrant dropped, saying no new information has emerged.

November 14

Mr Assange is questioned over the sex allegation at the Ecuadorian Embassy in the presence of Sweden's assistant prosecutor Ingrid Isgren and police inspector Cecilia Redell. The interview spans two days.

November 30

The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention rejects a request by the UK Government to review the case of Mr Assange.

2017

January 17

Barack Obama's decision to free whistleblower Chelsea Manning prompts speculation that Mr Assange will end his self-imposed exile.

WikiLeaks tweeted prior to the decision: 'If Obama grants Manning clemency Assange will agree to US extradition despite clear unconstitutionality of DoJ (Department of Justice) case.'

January 19

Mr Assange tells a press conference that he stands by his offer to go to the US, provided his rights are respected.

March 9

Former Ukip leader Nigel Farage is spotted leaving the embassy where Mr Assange is being held.

April 21

America's attorney general Jeff Sessions says Mr Assange's arrest is a 'priority' for the United States.

**That Flashing Thing You Do**

The so-called ‘Alien megastructure’ star, which has been puzzling astronomers and the public alike since it was first discovered in 2011, is once again emitting mysterious light patterns leaving science geeks in a tizzy.

Astronomers have been pondering what makes the star, with the catchy name of KIC 8462852, dim and flicker so drastically for years. Thankfully it started doing so again Friday with astronomers being able to view the phenomenon in real time. KIC 8462852, also known as ‘Tabby’s Star,’ lurks at the far reaches of our Milky Way galaxy, around 1,300 light years away in the constellation Cygnus. Though first discovered by the Kepler Space Telescope in 2009, it first caught people's imagination in 2011 when a group of “citizen scientists” - volunteers helping the real deal scientists find exoplanets - noticed the strange light patterns coming from Tabby’s Star. During one observation, the light emitted dimmed by over 20 percent, meaning that something must be passing in front of it. Just what that something is remains a mystery, with suggestions involving comets, or vast gas clouds being mooted, while others still believe it could be aliens. One such [believer](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2016/05/the-most-mysterious-star-in-our-galaxy/482397/) is Penn State University astronomer Jason Wright who, along with Tabetha Boyajian, after whom the star is named, is among the scientists trying to solve the enigma.

Wright and others believe that the irregular light patterns could suggest a host of alien megastructures orbiting the star. What their purpose is, if they do indeed exist, is also a mystery but the most obvious explanation would be that a super-advanced alien civilization has built technology to harness energy from it. One such megastructure, for example, is the ‘Dyson Sphere’ a theoretical construct which engulfs and draws energy from a star. First hypothesized in 1937 by science fiction writer Olaf Stapledon, it was popularized in 1960 by theoretical physicist and mathematician Freeman Dyson.

Though it may sound fantastical, it can’t be proven otherwise and the answer still eludes scientists. As they say, *“the truth is out there.”*

**The Enslavement of Americans**

If you’re at a job interview and someone asks how much money you currently make, do not answer the question.

This advice comes from equal pay icon Lilly Ledbetter and New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray**,** as well as experts in salary negotiation. Soon it’ll be codified into [law](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/nyc-takes-a-major-step-toward-closing-the-wage-gap_us_590b2ab6e4b0bb2d0875ce75?ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313) in New York.

Starting in October, employers in New York will no longer be allowed to ask job applicants for their salary history. The reasoning behind the prohibition is fairly intuitive. If you’re underpaid at your current job and your new employer bases your new salary on your old one, you’ll still wind up behind. With every raise at work offered as a percentage of your current salary, you never catch up. Even if you switch into a new industry, you carry your low pay with you.

“You could be set up for a lifetime of lower pay,” said McCray, wife of New York mayor Bill DeBlasio. “What New York has done is try and change the grim reality for women.” Nationwide women on average earn about 80 percent of what men make. Women of color face wider gaps.

Ledbetter, whose own pay discrimination lawsuit against Goodyear led to a new federal law on equal pay, said that she believed this law could’ve helped her when she was starting out.

Instead, after 19 years of working as a manager at The Goodyear Tire and Rubber company in Alabama she learned she was making far less than her male peers and had been for the entire time she was with the company. Ledbetter’s suit went all the way to the Supreme Court, which ruled [against](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/30/us/politics/30ledbetter-web.html?ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313) her in a 5-4 decision that turned on a technicality ― she waited too long to sue.

The Lilly Ledbetter Act, the first piece of legislation signed by President [Barack Obama](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/topic/barack-obama?ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313), eliminated that technicality. Ledbetter who was 70 when the law was signed never was able to recover the wages she lost after all those years.



She emphasized to HuffPost how important it is to get paid equitably at the outset of your career or otherwise suffer a lifetime of under-earning. “This goes on for the rest of your life,” she said. “In my case, my retirement, my 401(k) and my Social Security is based on those low wages that I earned.”

It’s going to take more than a law banning a question, however, to ensure women are paid fairly. Though certainly human resource departments around the city are revamping job applications and gearing up for the change, the question is common and is certain to endure.

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So what do you do? “I’d respond with a question,” Ledbetter says. Ask what the salary range is for the job or simply, “Why do you need to know?”

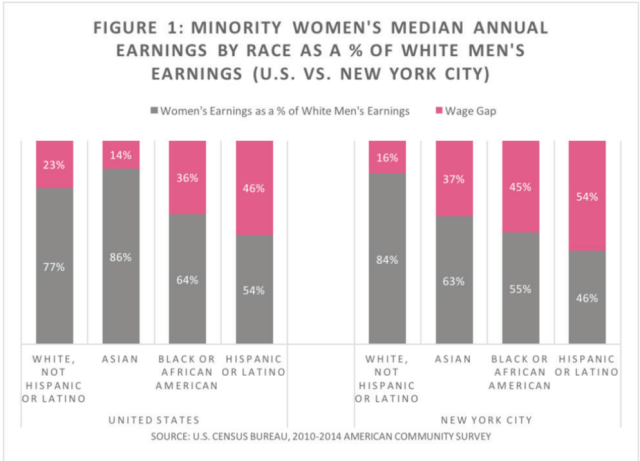
It’s probably not a great idea to come right out and tell an interviewer the question is illegal, unless you can figure out a way to do it with humor, says Deborah Kolb, the author of the book Negotiating at Work: Turn Small Wins Into Big Gains.

The better strategy is to turn the question around. “You say, ‘let me tell you what I’d like to make” or “ask, ‘how is this relevant?’” says Kolb, a professor emerita at Simmons College in Boston who advises many top executives on their careers.

She emphasized that you’ll have to do some research ahead of the conversation to figure out what a company typically pays, but emphasized that questions about salary history are best left unanswered. “The question really traps you from the very first job you take,” she said.

But fewer and fewer employers are allowed to ask. California, Philadelphia and Massachusetts have all passed laws similar to New York’s and about 20 other municipalities are considering their own legislation.

In New York, women comprise half of the city’s labor force, but**according to U.S. Census data analyzed for a** 2016 [report from the city’s public advocate](http://pubadvocate.nyc.gov/sites/advocate.nyc.gov/files/opa_pay_equity_report_final.pdf?ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313), **they continue to lag behind. White women**make on average 84 cents for every dollar earned by a white man. The wage gaps for minority women in New York are even wider than they are nationally: black women make just 55 percent of what white men earn. Hispanic women earn 46 percent.



The new question-ban salary laws were passed relatively recently so there’s not yet hard data on their effectiveness, however there is [plenty of information](http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2017/04/14/equal_pay_legislation_banning_salary_history_questions_is_based_in_data.html?ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313) out there that documents that women are paid less than men ― even when you control for experience, education and occupation.

And, we know that the pay gap between men and women widens as women get older. When women are just starting out they earn about 90 percent of what men make. The longer women stay in the workforce the farther behind they fall. By the time they turn 45 they’re making about 55 percent as much, a new analysis reported last weekend in the [New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/13/upshot/the-gender-pay-gap-is-largely-because-of-motherhood.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fclaire-cain-miller&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=collection&ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313) revealed. That’s due in large part because women become mothers and slow or stall their careers or because their managers believe they’re going to become mothers and don’t promote them.

But it’s also because their lower salaries follow them around like a bad credit score.

**Credit Bureau Ruins Dating**

When it comes to looking for love, it's all about that dirty little number. We're talking about your credit score.

For many singles, bad credit can be a deal breaker when it comes to finding love. About 30% of women and 20% of men say they won't marry a person with a low credit score, according to a new survey from FreeCreditScore.com that polled 1,000 adults.

Most respondents also said money management skills are just as important as looks when deciding whether someone is worth pursuing.

This is especially true for women, with nearly all female respondents ranking financial responsibility and financial compatibility as more important or just as important as career ambition, physical attraction and sex and intimacy, the survey found.

Male respondents said financial savvy is just as important as physical attraction, slightly less important than sex and intimacy and much more important than career ambition.

While 57% of men say that credit scores play into their dating decisions, a staggering 75% of women said they consider the numerical rating. Credit scores are calculated based on your payment history, amount owed, the types of credit you have and the number of years that credit has been available to you.

Linda Basloe, a 57-year-old from Herkimer, N.Y., with excellent credit, said she won't even give a man her digits until she knows his credit score.

"I definitely consider bad credit a deal breaker," she said. "I wouldn't even consider someone in that situation -- the joke about me has always been 'to please fill out a credit application and I will consider [you].'"

Why such concern over this magic number? Respondents said they worry that a partner with bad credit could hurt their prospects for qualifying for home loans, auto loans or lower interest rates and they'd be irresponsible about handling joint finances.

Basloe said she has worked hard to achieve financial independence and doesn't want a relationship with someone financially irresponsible to ruin that.

"I wouldn't attach myself to someone who would bring me down -- mortgage-wise, or when it comes to buying a larger house or even [qualifying for] insurance rates -- it affects every aspect of your life," she said. "It doesn't matter how beautiful they are, that's not going to pay the mortgage."

Three ways to boost your credit score

But no matter how important it may be, it can be an awkward topic to broach. Roughly half of the survey respondents have talked about their credit score with a romantic interest, with 39% discussing it during the first year of a relationship, 21% bringing it up before committing to a relationship and 19% comparing scores before moving in together. A mere 1% discussed their scores on a first date.

Basloe doesn't ask someone for their credit score before dating them because she thinks they could easily lie, but she does look for red flags. She scans the local newspaper for people who owe back taxes, pays attention to what kind of car a man drives and whether he has purchased a home or is still renting.

Jerry Koller, a 50-year old from Irvine, Calif., said he put a halt to a budding romance a couple of years ago after seeing stacks of unopened bills and rent notices in his date's kitchen.

"I went to dinner and casually asked her about her credit and she told me she couldn't buy a car recently as her scores were no good," he said. "[I] made it a last date."

To cater to the credit-obsessed, there are even dating sites where you can find someone in your score range. At Creditscoredating.com, credit scores are factored into the matchmaking process, pairing you with users who have similar scores. Since scores are self-reported, however, it's hard to tell if someone is telling the truth.

According to the site's scoring guide:

"800-850 is 'MARRIAGE POTENTIAL DING DING DING' 750-800 is 'take him/her home to Mom' 700-750 is a 'fixer-upper' 650-700 is 'fun for a night out, maybe, but bring cash' 600-650 is 'keep lookin'!'; anything below 500 is 'RUN because they won't even get a car loan, probably, and how embarrassing will that be at the PTA meetings?' 200 is 'this person is just pulling your leg and is really royalty.'"

Similarly, Texas matchmaker Melanie Matcek said she runs background checks on clients before helping them find love. While she doesn't pull their credit scores, she says she can get a clear picture of their financial situations and find out if they've ever been in legal trouble that would have impacted their credit.

"If they are unstable financially, they are weeded out," she said. "I've run across many singles that are looking for someone to 'rescue' them. This is a recipe for disaster. Everyone must be able to stand on their own two feet first."

What are the prospects when the person you are considering dating pays cash for everything they want, including a car? Hmm?