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| Jihad Report Jun 09, 2018 -Jun 15, 2018 |
| Attacks | **46** |
| Killed | **242** |
| Injured | **219** |
| Suicide Blasts | **11** |
| Countries | **13** |

**Deep Deep Police State**

A federal judge has jailed ex-Trump campaign chair Paul Manafort ahead of his fall trial, citing recently filed obstruction charges.

“I cannot turn a blind eye to this,” Judge Amy Berman told a D.C. courtroom as she revoked Manafort’s bail. “This isn’t middle school, I can’t take your phone.”

Andrew Weissman, special counsel Robert Mueller’s lead attack dog, filed an 18-page motion early this month the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, asking Judge Amy Berman to determine if Manafort violated the terms of his bail by possibly influencing witnesses testimony. Remember, there was no proof. There was no trial. There was no jury of his peers.

“According to an FBI affidavit included with the motion, Manafort used encrypted messaging applications in February to try to reach two unnamed business partners who could possibly be called as witnesses to his alleged fraud and money laundering,” NBC reports.

Mueller indicted the former campaign chairman in both Virginia and Washington on alleged crimes, that took place 10 years before Trump announced his run for the White House, ranging from money laundering to conspiracy against the United States. The veteran Republican lobbyist, who has been under house arrest since last October, is accused of contacting a staffer of the public relations firm behind lobby efforts for the Ukraine.

According to Mueller’s lead attack dog, Weissman, Manafort—the propagandist calls him the former Trump campaign chairman—allegedly called the public relations staff, referred to as “D1,” while driving with his wife in Italy.

They tapped his phone. The recording says, “This is Paul, Paul Manafort. I need to give you a heads up about the Hapsburg Group,” Manafort said, according to court filings. First of all, the Hapsburg Group was working to improve the image of the President of Ukraine in the United States. This all occurred years before he ever knew or worked for Trump.

The staffer is said to have hung up on Manafort. Manafort’s trail in Washington is scheduled to take place in September. Kevin Downing, Manafort’s attorney, told ABC News he has no comment on the judge revoking his client’s bail.

 “Mr. Manafort is innocent and nothing about this latest allegation changes our defense,” Manafort spokesman Jason Maloni told Breitbart News in a statement June 5. “We will do our talking in court.”

That day may never come, because the prosecutors know they will lose. That’s not the point. That’s not the strategy. The strategy is that Manafort is 69 years old. Mueller can keep him in jail for years awaiting trial. In fact, he could keep Manafort in prison for the rest of his life, or until he agrees to sign documents incriminating Donald Trump. Now, you know how Roosevelt’s FBI was designed to work.

**Amputation at the FBI**

The **Federal Bureau of Investigation** (**FBI**), formerly the **Bureau of Investigation** (**BOI**), is the domestic [intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_agency) and [security](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Security_agency) service of the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States), and its principal [federal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_law) [law enforcement agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_enforcement_agency).

An **intelligence agency** is a [government agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_agency) responsible for the collection, [analysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_analysis), and exploitation of information in support of [law enforcement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_enforcement), [national security](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_security), [military](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military), and [foreign policy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_policy) objectives.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_agency#cite_note-BI-1)

Means of information gathering are both overt and covert and may include [espionage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Espionage), [communication interception](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signals_intelligence), [cryptanalysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cryptanalysis), cooperation with other institutions, and evaluation of public sources. The assembly and propagation of this information is known as [intelligence analysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_analysis) or [intelligence assessment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_assessment).

Intelligence agencies can provide the following services for their national governments.

* Give early warning of impending crises;
* Serve national and international [crisis management](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_management) by helping to discern the intentions of current or potential opponents;
* Inform national defense planning and [military operations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_operation);
* Protect sensitive information secrets, both of their own sources and activities, and those of other state agencies;
* May act covertly to influence the outcome of events in favor of [national interests](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_interest),

While the notion of state reason comes first as a theme of study in political science, it is a very vague concept in law and has never been an object of systematic study. This obvious lack of interest is due to a deliberate epistemological choice - a form of [positivism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positivism) applied to legal science; and as a result legal science affirms its autonomy regarding other social sciences while constituting with exactness its own object - law - in order to describe it. In doing so it implies deterministic causes which have an influence on its descriptive function. This method which puts aside state reason is not without any consequence: the fact that state reason is not taken into account by legal science is to be integrated within a global rejection of a description of law as presented in political science. A fundamental dynamic in modern constitutionalism, "the seizure of the political phenomenon by law" is all the more remarkable when it claims a scientific value, thus a neutrality aiming at preventing all objection. This convergence of legal science and constitutionalism has the tautological character of a rhetorical discourse in which law is simultaneously the subject and the object of the discourse on law. Having as a basis state reason, it allows a reflection on the legitimacy of power and authority of modern Western societies; this in connection with the representations which make it and which it makes "state reason and public law."

* or influence [international security](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_security); and
* Defense against the efforts of other national intelligence agencies ([counter-intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counter-intelligence)).

Operating under the jurisdiction of the [US Department of Justice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Justice), the FBI is also a member of the [U.S. Intelligence Community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Intelligence_Community) and reports to both the [Attorney General](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Attorney_General) and the [Director of National Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Director_of_National_Intelligence).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation#cite_note-intel-3)  In this time period, the Director was James Clapper:  retired [lieutenant general](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lieutenant_general_%28United_States%29) in the [United States Air Force](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force) and is the former [Director of National Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Director_of_National_Intelligence). Clapper has held several key positions within the [United States Intelligence Community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Intelligence_Community). He served as director of the [Defense Intelligence Agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defense_Intelligence_Agency) (DIA) from 1992 until 1995. He was the first director of defense intelligence within the [Office of the Director of National Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_of_the_Director_of_National_Intelligence) and simultaneously the [Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Under_Secretary_of_Defense_for_Intelligence).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Clapper#cite_note-3) He served as the director of the [National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Geospatial-Intelligence_Agency) (NGA) from September 2001 until June 2006.

On June 5, 2010, President [Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama) nominated Clapper to replace [Dennis C. Blair](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_C._Blair) as [United States Director of National Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Director_of_National_Intelligence). Clapper was unanimously confirmed by the Senate for the position on August 5, 2010.

Following the June 2013 leak of documents detailing the [NSA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Security_Agency) practice of collecting telephone [metadata](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metadata) on millions of Americans' telephone calls, Clapper was accused of [perjury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perjury) for telling a congressional committee hearing that the NSA does not collect any type of data on millions of Americans earlier that year. One senator asked for his resignation, and a group of 26 senators complained about Clapper's responses under questioning. In November 2016, Clapper resigned as director of national intelligence, effective at the end of President Obama's term. In May 2017, he joined the Washington, D.C.-based think tank the [Center for a New American Security](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Center_for_a_New_American_Security) (CNAS) as a Distinguished Senior Fellow for Intelligence and National Security.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Clapper#cite_note-Urwitz_2017-4)

Although many of the FBI's functions are unique, its activities in support of national security are comparable to those of the British [MI5](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MI5) and the Russian [FSB](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Security_Service). They are, for all intents and purposes, spies. They put on disguises, listen to conversations secretly, and go through people’s trash to find evidence to accomplish their primary function. Make no mistake. The primary function of the FBI has been, since the moment Roosevelt created it, to protect the Democrats from their enemies and ensure that they never lose control of the government. In the years since 1935, the Democrats have never lost control of the Senate, regardless of their majority status. Conservatives have never had 60 seats in the Senate, nor have they controlled a majority in Congress.

Unlike the [Central Intelligence Agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Intelligence_Agency) (CIA), which has no law enforcement authority and is focused on intelligence collection and manipulaton through investment, bribes, assassinations, and compromise strictly outside the USA, the FBI can only conduct these activities inside the United States, maintaining 56 [field offices](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_FBI_field_offices) in major cities throughout the United States, and more than 400 resident agencies in lesser cities and areas across the nation. At an FBI field office, a senior-level FBI officer concurrently serves as the representative of the [Director of National Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Director_of_National_Intelligence).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation#cite_note-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation#cite_note-7)

The **Director of National Intelligence** (**DNI**) is the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) [government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_government_of_the_United_States) [Cabinet-level](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabinet_of_the_United_States) official—subject to the authority, direction, and control of the [President of the United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States)—required by the [Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence_Reform_and_Terrorism_Prevention_Act_of_2004). Any assertion that counter-intelligence operations against Donald Trump, as a candidate or as the President, could have taken place without the knowledge or approval of the President is preposterous at every level.

* James Clapper served as head of the seventeen-member [United States Intelligence Community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Intelligence_Community),
* He personally directed and oversaw the [National Intelligence Program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Intelligence_Community#Programs); and
* served as a personal advisor to the President and his executive offices of the [National Security Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_National_Security_Council), and the [Homeland Security Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeland_Security_Council) about intelligence matters related to national security (another ubiquitous term designed to make you feel everything is necessary)

The Director produces the [President's Daily Brief](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President%27s_Daily_Brief) (PDB), a [top-secret](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classified_information_in_the_United_States) and highly classified document fusing intelligence from the various collection agencies, given each morning to the President of the United States.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Director_of_National_Intelligence#cite_note-1) The PDB is seen by the President and to those approved by the President.

In other words, everything the FBI is doing is broken down, consolidated, and reported in brief format to the President. Every major case is discussed with the President. The President can advise and direct the DNI to pursue, not pursue, or redirect their investigation into certain individuals.

Despite its domestic focus, the FBI also maintains a significant international footprint, operating 60 Legal Attache (LEGAT) offices and 15 sub-offices in [US embassies and consulates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_diplomatic_missions_of_the_United_States) across the globe. Ali-Harzi of the Benghazi massacre was interviewed in Tunisia by the FBI. They were ordered by Hillary to release him. He was assassinated by a drone a short while later as a loose end of the Clinton Crime Syndicate.

 These foreign offices exist primarily for the purpose of coordination with foreign security services and are not authorized to conduct unilateral operations in the host countries.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation#cite_note-8) The FBI can and does at times carry out secret activities overseas,[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation#cite_note-9) just as the CIA has a [limited domestic function](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Resources_Division); these activities generally require coordination across government agencies. When the Democrats have someone they cannot allow to testify, they send in the FBI, and the person is usually killed. These days, we called the process Breitbarting. It has gone by other names, such as Arkanside.

The FBI was established in 1908 as the [Bureau of Investigation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bureau_of_Investigation), the BOI or BI for short. It was effective and drew the attention of Roosevelt and upgraded with more funds, better tools, and universal authority to do the bidding of the President. He changed the name to the *Federal* Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1935. The FBI [headquarters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Headquarters) is the [J. Edgar Hoover Building](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Edgar_Hoover_Building), located in [Washington, D.C.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington%2C_D.C.)

This time period of the United States was one of post-Depression Fascism that was established by President Roosevelt. Yes, he was a fascist. He didn’t hide it. The people supported him almost universally, because he was handing out billions in welfare to his voters. The pattern worked so well, the Democrats have used this strategy ever since.

The short story is that Vice-President John Nance Garner didn’t like it, and when it was his time to run for president, the Democrats cheated him out of it at a brokered 1940 convention through a sinister plot that resulted in the third term of Roosevelt, even though his name was not even on the ballot. Cactus Jack Garner retreated to Texas and almost committed suicide over the way the Democrats cheated the nation out of its election.

Of course, the new man selected for Vice-President was Truman. He aligned much better with the Fascist policies of Roosevelt, and after the war, he set up a secret corporate government patterned after that of Mussolini, himself. It was fast. It was effective at creating a very special mechanism of government designed to get a nation on its feet rapidly. But, the process closed a wound that had not been properly treated. Gangrene set in almost immediately.

But it didn’t matter. By the time Eisenhower was leaving office, he publicly disclosed the military industrial complex as a cancer taking over the festering guts of the nation, mortally wounded by the Democrats 10 years before. Truman’s corporate government run by the oldest and most trusted bureaucrats, became official under President Jimmy Carter as the Senior Executive Service. They have permanent tenure, immune to Presidential authority. They receive the same salary as the Vice President, whatever it is at the time, and they cannot be fired for any reason. There are currently 685 of these men and women running our government. They are not elected. There is no recourse against their decisions. They are the most skilled propagandists the world has known. Many of them have been in their positions for over 40 years. Any effort to stop them by any President has been met with fatal consequences.

The Holman Rule, passed into law in 1876, allows members of Congress to propose amendments to appropriations bills that target specific government employees or programs in an effort to cut spending.

Under the rule passed the week before Trump’s inauguration, would allow the President to reduce the SES salary to $1 a year to force them to retire.

IN the last 83 years, the FBI has become the world’s most powerful and most feared spy organization the world has ever known. Assassins, hackers, experts in torture, terroristic litigation, and economic extortion rose quickly in the ranks and became so powerful they struck fear in the bad guys, and in the enemies of the Democrats. Thousands of Republicans, reporters, authors, film makers, radio talk show personalities, TV producers, and even Presidents of the US and other nations were intimidated, compromised, and even assassinated to keep their masters in power.

By the early 1990’s the FBI’s role as the primary opposition research firm for the Democrats was well known, and universally feared.

**The Coup D’ Etat**

Rod Rosenstein is planning to be the clean-up crew for the effort to unseat the President. The Clinton Crime Syndicate is gambling that they can delay the public view of the facts until the election begins on Labor Day. But Devin Nunes is about to impeach him. Believe me, he has been ready for a while to do this. He needs 218 votes to do this.

“What would happen to a country whose top police agency went bad? Furthermore, what would happen to that country if the bad cops in that federal police agency, in order to protect exposure of their crimes went after those who were charged with investigating them?

And what if those same bad cops could successfully threaten the nation’s media to keep you from knowing any of this? Well, unfortunately, all that is going on right on in the USA – right now – today.

But today, we have come to a turning point, where the Inspector General of the Justice Department is about to release a report which – hopefully – will start to out the truth of this coup d’état against the very fabric of our free society – the rule of law.”

**Timeline**

There are three possible explanations for the ongoing tension between congressional investigators and the Department of Justice.

The first is that the investigators, led by Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.), are using Justice’s reluctance to share classified documents as a means of undercutting the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and, more specifically, to cast Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein as a bad actor to facilitate his firing. Rosenstein, as you may be aware, both appointed special counsel Robert S. Mueller III and has sole authority over Mueller and his investigation; ousting Rosenstein could severely hamper Mueller’s probe.

The second is that Rosenstein and Justice officials actually are trying to hamper a congressional investigation into the origin of the counterintelligence probe into the 2016 presidential campaign of Donald Trump. Nunes has frequently argued that the investigation was born from biased information and conducted by biased FBI officials. Rosenstein and FBI Director Christopher A. Wray, the argument goes, are trying to prevent that bias from being revealed by making it hard for Nunes et al. to review important materials.

The third is that this is an expected tension between oversight committees and the people they oversee, the sort of traditional tug-of-war that one would expect from parties seeking as much information as possible and others worried about releasing more than they should.

This third is probably the least popular of the three theories.

On Wednesday, The Washington Post reported that the tension between congressional Republicans and leaders at Justice was coming to a head, with the suggestion from Republicans close to President Trump that Rosenstein might face impeachment proceedings if he doesn’t turn over documents requested by investigators.

It’s important to note that this pressure comes at a point in time when Rosenstein has increasingly been a focus of negative attention from Trump. It may simply be a coincidence that Rosenstein is being threatened with congressional action at the same time that Trump is offering wan responses to questions about whether he’ll fire the deputy attorney general. (His argument Wednesday evening was, in short, “Well, I haven’t fired him yet.”) Your perspective on whether it’s a coincidence is probably tied to which of the three above theories you subscribe to.

The pressure on Rosenstein and Justice to release documents related to the investigations into the Trump campaign is indeed not new, having begun more than a year ago. What is new, though, is the pace at which Republican investigators are seeking responses and the extent to which they seem to be willing to argue that extraordinary measures are required.

There’s another complicating factor. The critiques of the Department of Justice are largely being led by Nunes as head of the House Intelligence Committee. Nunes’s enthusiastic defenses of Trump, though, have twice led to charges that he overstepped his bounds and have cast suspicion over the motivations behind his actions.

It’s worth fleshing out the timeline of how and where Nunes, Trump, investigators and the Department of Justice interacted.

**Forget About Cryptocurrencies**

The world’s first trillionaire won’t come from cryptocurrency or some clever new app – he or she will become rich from asteroid mining. Theresa May avoids defeat by rebel MPs over 'meaningful vote' on final Brexit deal That’s what bankers Goldman Sachs reckon, anyway – and several companies are now vying to be the first into space. NASA estimates that the total value of asteroids out there could be up to $700 quintillion – equivalent to £75 billion each for us here on Earth. Several companies are now building the machines which will take us there – including Deep Space Industries, which is building a steam-powered thruster for spacecraft, the Guardian reports. British company AMC (Asteroid Mining Corporation), hopes to send tiny spacecraft out to grab platinum (common in asteroids, and very pricey on Earth) and then use the metal to finance bigger missions.

American companies such as Planetary Resources – backed by Titanic director James Cameron – are already planning to send robotic vehicles to mine precious metals and rare resources from asteroids. Some have predicted that the mineral wealth is so vast it could destroy our world’s economy. The total value of asteroids could be enough to give everyone on Earth £75 billion (Getty) NASA’s Psyche mission is set to launch in 2022 – and will target a metal-rich asteroid known as 16 Psyche, estimated to be worth £8,000 quadrillion. Christian Schroeder of the University of Stirling says, ‘Asteroids crossing

Earth’s orbit may become convenient targets for mining operations, providing materials that are running out on Earth.’ Psyche principal investigator Lindy Elkins-Tanton of Arizona State University in Tempe said earlier this year that the 124-mile wide asteroid would be worth the astronomical sum if we could somehow drag it back to Earth.

**Mars, Absolutely**

Humans will "absolutely" be on Mars in the future, NASA chief scientist Jim Green told USA TODAY. And the first person to go is likely living today, he said.

After the ["building blocks of life" were discovered on the Red Planet](http://preview.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/06/07/life-mars-building-blocks-life-discovered-3-billion-year-old-organic-matter/681597002/), life on Mars and living on Mars seems to be less like a scene from the movie [*The Martian*](https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/movies/2015/10/01/the-martian-matt-damon-review/73067020/) and more like a reality.

"Now, we see Mars is an even better location for having past life," Green said. "It’s just getting better and better."

Mars is more Earth-like than any other planet in the solar system, making it an attractive second option for the human race. There's also a natural beauty on the planet: a grand canyon that measures nearly the entire width of the U.S. and [a volcano the size of Arizona](https://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/gallery/atlas/olympus-mons.html).

The planet could offer humans a "brand new life with brand new vistas," Green said.

The plan is to send someone to the planet by 2040. But that's dependent on quite a few factors.

Here are some obstacles, outlined by Green:

**We have to land.** Right now, NASA is able to land a 1-ton vehicle on the surface of Mars. For a human to land, it would need to park about 10 tons on the surface. That vehicle would also need to land with precision — mainly not mountains or hills or rocks.

**We would need to blast off from Mars.** It's not a one-way ticket, at least right now. That's why NASA is working on a [Mars 2020 rover](https://mars.nasa.gov/mars2020/mission/rover/). "Sometime in the next decade, we plan to blast off the surface of Mars and return."

**We would need to wear spacesuits — all the time.** Weather on Mars is extreme. The difference between Monday and Tuesday could be 170 degrees. The average temperature is well below zero. The air is also largely carbon dioxide — good for plants, bad for people.

**We'd have to get used to dust storms.** About every 26 months, it's summer on Mars, meaning prime dust storm season. These storms, made up of fine dust that gets caught in the atmosphere, can darken daylight to a twilight stage and last months.

**We need to build an entire infrastructure.** "The people that would go there are real pioneers," Green said. The first humans on Mars would need to farm and establish a food source. Scientists believe beans, asparagus and potatoes are viable crops for soil there. Homes would also need to be built. Green said 3D printers might be able to use dust on the planet to create habitats.

**Blue Wave is Flushing**

Voters in South Carolina, Virginia, Maine, North Dakota, and Nevada will vote in primaries tonight, as pro-Trump candidates once again take center stage in the GOP primaries.

Polls close in South Carolina at 7 p.m. eastern time, and anti-Trump Rep. and former Governor Mark Sanford (R-SC) is facing a fierce primary challenge from pro-Trump candidate Katie Arrington. Trump endorsed Arrington hours before polls closed, saying Sanford would be “better off in Argentina,” a reference to the time in 2009 when Sanford’s staff claimed Sanford was hiking the “Appalachian trail” when he was actually having an affair with an Argentinian journalist an Argentinian journalist in Buenos Aires.

Governor Henry McMaster was the first statewide official to endorse Trump when he was the Palmetto’s State’s lieutenant governor, and he is hoping his strong ties to Trump will help him cross the 50% threshold in a crowded field to serve a full term. The establishment Republican governor endorsed moderate-liberal Republican presidential candidate Jon Huntsman during the 2012 GOP presidential primaries, but his support for Trump has pushed him to the front of the pack with the state’s conservative primary voters.

**Robots in Food Sales**

Faced with rising labor costs, fast-food giant Wendy's has announced a plan to replace employees with self-ordering kiosks in 1,000 stores by the end of the year. Former McDonald's USA CEO Ed Rensi says Wendy's move is a direct response to the push for a minimum wage increase to $15-an hour, and he believes automation is here to stay.

“No question about it, Rensi told the FOX Business Network’s Stuart Varney. "It’s not only the minimum wage, it’s the work rules, it’s the joint employment requirement, now the franchisors are responsible for the labor practices of franchisees. It’s all nonsense, it’s over-regulation."

Rensi says the industry will ultimately invest in robots over workers, which he believes will be cost-effective in the long term. “I have said that robots are going to replace people in the service industry going forward," Rensi said. "And a self-service kiosk is nothing more than automation taking over people.”

Asked about President Trump's address to a joint session of Congress, Rensi said it was "a CEO speech." Citizens, he said, are the board and Trump is the CEO "and he delivered a magnificent speech, strategic, very carefully stated, hit the points of things that need to get done.”

But Rensi warned if Republicans and Democrats don’t get behind Trump and begin implementing his agenda, then American business’ support of Trump’s policies will quickly turn sour. “They’re falling in love with his strategic direction and his intent. But if the Republicans and the Democrats don’t get their stuff together and start executing, they will fall away just as quickly as they climbed on board.”

**Trade War Blood in the Water**

Whenever there is blood in the water, the sharks go into a frenzy. They lose their minds, their bearings, and their morals. President Trump initiated tariffs against China for dumping cheap, worthless steel onto our markets. The press would have you believe that they only supply 2% of our steel, but we know better. Chinese steel is so cheap, that it rusts when the weatherman even predicts rain. Well, the President put a tariff on the regifted steel coming in through a few of our closest allies. That’s not rust in the water. It’s trading blood that dripped into the water, which started the globalist sharks swimming around faster.

While trading desks are scrambling to goalseek the Fed's clearly hawkish statement into a dovish speech by Powell, in order to keep the Koolaid flowing at least a bit longer and stem today's bloodletting, one potential catalyst that could send the dollar even higher is a confirmation from the WSJ of what Politico and we [reported earlier today](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-06-13/china-trade-war-back-trump-slap-beijing-tariffs-friday-zte-deal-verge-collapse), namely that the Trump administration, deepening its global trade offensive, **is set to levy tariffs on tens of billions of dollars of Chinese goods in the coming week, perhaps as early as Friday—a move that is likely to spark heavy retaliation from Beijing.**

What the WSJ adds to what [we already knew](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-06-13/china-trade-war-back-trump-slap-beijing-tariffs-friday-zte-deal-verge-collapse), is that Trump's mind was already made up last week:

*Senior trade officials in the White House, Commerce and Treasury departments, and the U.S. Trade Representative’s office met on the issue before President Donald Trump went to a summit of the Group of Seven industrialized nations in Canada on Friday,****and agreed that the U.S. should move ahead with tariffs, said U.S. officials and others briefed on the talks.***

While the odds are minimal, there is a chance that Trump will nix an escalation in the trade war: as the WSJ notes, **"Trump still hasn’t given his final approval and could have second-thoughts about applying heavy pressure on China",**perhaps because "the U.S. wants Beijing’s cooperation in its efforts to get North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons."

We doubt it. As we said earlier, "China was seen as playing a key role in getting North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to the table with Trump, who has consistently linked his trade demands to Beijing’s willingness to help on North Korea; **now that the summit is over and the wheels are turning, Trump no longer needs China's aid.**"

And in his populist approach of focusing on his campaign promises and in hopes of distracting from the Mueller probe, Trump will do what he is confident will lead to more popular support: escalate the war with China at a time when the US economy is supposedly humming along.

So how big will be the next trade war round?

While the exact amount of goods subject to tariffs is still being finalized, the administration’s list was initially $50 billion in goods, and it is being refined as some products are taken off the list and others are added, following a public comment period.

But what is perhaps most notable is that as the WSJ highlights, "the **agreement by the heads of the agencies represents an unusual moment of consensus on trade"** in an administration often at odds with itself over how to proceed.

*Trade hawks in the administration want to crack down hard on China, while globalists are seeking compromise.*

If the WSJ report is accurate, this time even the globalists want to take on Beijing.

They know who is going to lose, because China doesn’t buy anything from anybody. However, if you like those $5 shirts at Walmart, you better get over there before Friday. That’s all I can say.

**Will the Real Employment Figures Please Stand Up**?

Every time the mainstream media touts some “wonderful new economic numbers” I just want to cringe.  Yes, it is true that the economic numbers have gotten slightly better since Donald Trump entered the White House,**but the rosy economic picture that the mainstream media is constantly painting for all of us is completely absurd.**

As you are about to see,**if honest numbers were being used all of our major economic numbers would be absolutely terrible.**Of course we can hope for a major economic turnaround for America under Donald Trump, but we certainly are not there yet.  Economist John Williams of [shadowstats.com](http://www.shadowstats.com/) has been tracking what our key economic numbers would look like if honest numbers were being used for many years, and he has gained a sterling reputation for being accurate.  And according to him, it looks like the U.S. economy has been in a recession and/or depression for a very long time.

**Let’s start by talking about unemployment.**

**We are being told that the unemployment rate in the United States is currently “3.8 percent”, which would be the lowest that it has been**[**“in nearly 50 years”**](http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/the-truth-about-the-employment-numbers-nearly-102-million-working-age-americans-do-not-have-a-job-right-now)**.**

To support this claim, the mainstream media endlessly runs articles declaring how wonderful everything is.  For example, the following is from a recent New York Times article entitled [“We Ran Out of Words to Describe How Good the Jobs Numbers Are”](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/upshot/we-ran-out-of-words-to-describe-how-good-the-jobs-numbers-are.html)…

*The real question in analyzing*[*the May jobs numbers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/business/economy/jobs-report.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=first-column-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news)*released Friday is whether there are enough synonyms for “good” in an online thesaurus to describe them adequately.*

*So, for example, “splendid” and “excellent” fit the bill. Those are the kinds of terms that are appropriate when the United States economy adds 223,000 jobs in a month, despite being nine years into an expansion, and when the unemployment rate falls to 3.8 percent, a new 18-year low.*

Doesn’t that sound great?

**It would be great, if the numbers that they were using were honest.**

Who can forget Sean Hannity repeating over and over again 95 million Americans out of work? Does anyone believe we created 95 million jobs in less than two years? Of course not. The truth, of course, is that the percentage of the population that is employed has only slightly budged since the depths of the last recession.  **According to John Williams, if honest numbers were being used the unemployment rate**[**would actually be 21.5 percent today**](http://www.shadowstats.com/alternate_data/unemployment-charts)**. That is one in five people unemployed. Although that is not true everywhere, what is very true is that people are underemployed. They are working for less, working longer, and changing jobs more frequently.**

So what is the reason for the gaping disparity?

As I have explained repeatedly, ***the government has simply been moving people from the “officially unemployed” category to the “not in the labor force” category for many, many years.* Remember, just because someone didn’t file for unemployment, does not mean they are not unemployed. About 4% of our population is receiving unemployment, but that is nowhere close to representing who is actually unemployed.**

If we use the government’s own numbers, there are nearly [102 million working age Americans](http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/the-truth-about-the-employment-numbers-nearly-102-million-working-age-americans-do-not-have-a-job-right-now) that do not have a job right now.  That is higher than it was at any point during the Obama Administration. **We are being conned.** I have a friend down in south Idaho that is a highly trained software engineer that has been out of work for two years. Temp Agencies are booming, because companies will not hire people. The liability for hiring people is too high. Obamacare, diversity, sexism, racism, and labor lawsuits have clogged the sprockets of the labor market to the point it can barely move.

The system, and the regionality of some industries like tech, automotive, and aerospace have made most people unemployable. Housing in Seattle, LA, and Chicago has gotten so high that working people are living 3-4 families to an address in order the afford it. The rest are homeless. And if you live in a remote area like Boise or Tulsa or Charlotte, you may be searching for years before you find a job in your area. I myself have been searching in the Charlotte area for nearly 9 years. You see where I am working? Dallas, Texas.

**Next, let’s talk about inflation.**

According to Williams, the way inflation has been calculated in this country has been repeatedly changed [over the decades](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-06-08/us-depression-how-john-williams-became-americas-most-important-statistician)…

*The truth is that U.S. statistical agencies overestimate GDP data by underestimating the inflation deflator they use in the calculation. Inflation is caused by one way and one way only. Government prints money or passes unfunded mandates that add no value to the system. That’s it. Don’t let anyone tell you that productivity or growth cause inflation. That’s a bunch of crap. More money in the system through printing—like QE run by Obama for 8 years—cheapens the dollar and helps no one except the banks by shoring up the bond markets.*

*Manipulating the inflation rate also enables the US government to pay out pensioners less than they were promised, by fudging cost of living adjustments.*

*This manipulation has ironically taken place quite openly over decades, as successive Republican and Democratic administrations made “improvements” in the way they calculated the data. Exactly lie they’re doing today.*

If inflation was still calculated the way that it was in 1990, the inflation rate would be [6 percent](http://www.shadowstats.com/alternate_data/inflation-charts) today instead of about 3 percent. **And if inflation was still calculated the way that it was in 1980, the inflation rate would be about**[10 percent](http://www.shadowstats.com/alternate_data/inflation-charts) today.

If you have bought anything in the last 5 years you will agree it feels more accurate. Bought any dried mushrooms lately? Up 400%. Canned soup? Forget about it.

  We have all seen how prices for housing, food and health insurance have soared in recent years.  Health care is about the same, if you pay cash, as it was 10 years ago. You can mark that up to productivity. Instruments have much improved in the last 10 years, nd there are now non-invasive cures for things that required lengthy and costly treatments 10 years ago.

 After examining what has happened in your own life, do you believe that the official inflation rates of “2 percent” and “3 percent” that we have been given in recent years are anywhere near accurate? I didn’t think so.

**Because inflation is massively understated, that has a tremendous effect on our GDP numbers as well.** If accurate inflation numbers were being used, we would still be in the 2004 recession right now, but we are moving in the right direction; finally.

*Another clue is to evaluate the U.S. economy just as economists would a third world nation whose data they don’t trust. They do this by resorting to figures that are hard to fudge.*

*There, too, by a variety of measures—ranging from petroleum consumption to consumer goods production to the Cass Freight Index—the U.S. economy appears to have not grown much, if at all, since the turn of the millennium. Energy usage is flat and looks flat fort the next 20 years, unless housing begins to start up again.*

**In the end, all that any of us really need to do is to just open our eyes and look at what is happening all around us.**The retail functionality is changing forever. Gone are bricks and mortar stores that really added no value to society.

*This city’s Target store is gone.*

*So is Kmart, MC Sports, JCPenney, Vanity and soon Herberger’s, a department store. There are ghost malls everywhere, missing anchors like JC Penny, Sears, and Dilliards and prices are out of sight in the malls.*

**Of course it isn’t just the U.S. economy that is troubled either.**

We are living in the terminal phase of the greatest debt bubble in global history, many nations around the globe are already experiencing a very deep economic downturn, and our planet is literally in the process of economic terminal leukemia dying.

So please don’t believe the hype.

***Yes, we definitely hope that things will get better, but the truth is that things have not been “good” for the U.S. economy for a very, very long time.***

**The Asylum Asylum**

On Monday, Attorney General Jeff Sessions made the decision to end the practice of allowing individuals to seek asylum in the United States based on domestic abuse or gang violence. Those asylum claims are a bit too broad, he reasoned.

“When private actors inflict violence based on a personal relationship with a victim, then the victim’s membership in a larger group may well not be ‘one central reason’ for the abuse,” Sessions wrote.

He elaborated:

“The prototypical refugee flees her home country because the government has persecuted her,” Sessions wrote. “An alien may suffer threats and violence in a foreign country for any number of reasons relating to her social, economic, family, or other personal circumstances. Yet the asylum statute does not provide redress for all misfortune.”

Narrowing asylum claims this week, Sessions ruled that applicants must show that either “race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion was or will be at least one central reason” for their persecution.

The announcement overturns an immigration appeals court ruling that granted asylum to a Salvadoran woman who said she had been abused by her husband. The ruling would also have affected a woman named Aminta Cifuentes, who in 2005 fled Guatemala for the U.S. in fear her her husband would kill her. A decade later, the U.S. government granted her asylum. The Washington Post highlighted her story Tuesday.

The argument:

Countless women who are the victims of domestic violence in Central America flee north (some with their children) because the police in their home countries are unable to protect them. They are also terrorized by gang violence - constant death threats to them and their children.

But Jeff Sessions thinks these women aren't eligible for asylum because their husbands are only violent to them - not all women. Lynum added that she was "sick to her stomach."

Karen Musalo, a defense lawyer on the case who directs the Center for Gender and Refugee Studies at the University of California Hastings College of the Law, even accused Sessions of taking women back to the Dark Ages.

“What this decision does is yank us all back to the Dark Ages of human rights and women’s human rights and the conceptualization of it,” she said.

The case can be made that surely there is room in America for one woman who was beaten by her husband in Guatemala. True. There is. But there are two facts that are being overlooked by the media.

1. There is a line a hundred thousand deep of women who can say that they need asylum, just because they are a women. They don’t want to obey the Asylum law that states that the next adjacent country is the one who grants the asylum. Oh no. They want to come to America. And not just any place in America. They want a place with generous welfare benefits and comfortable weather. A court president like this would open the floodgates of women from all over the world.
2. The second thing to consider is the $500 million paid to Guatemala in the past 5 years. Guatemala has the same population as a country as Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. They have been given half a billion dollars of cash in the past 5 years. Now, this has lined the pockets of the top 1% of the county’s corrupt government officials, but that is no one’s fault but our government. We don’t ask for an accounting. We don’t require human rights. We don’t ask them to do anything, except give us cheap access to their oil, lumber, and other natural resources. They get it just fine. Keep the money and send the poorest, most illiterate people to the US.

This is precisely why Sessions said no. It is the right thing to do. We should never be in the business of paying off government officials in foreign countries. Stop it.

**DACA Reloaded**

Immigration is the thorn in everyone’s side. Both parties say they want immigration reform. And both parties have dithered on it. Right now, both sides are trying to offer protections to the so-called DREAMERS, illegals who were brought over as children. There are some 800,000 of them. Yes, we know where they are and where they live; that was part of the application process for DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which was enacted under the Obama White House. It’s arguably unconstitutional. It’s legislation; the executive does not do that. There are serious questions about separation of powers. Regardless, the phased draw down of DACA by the Trump White House spurred legal challenges. Trump’s plan was a gradual phasing out, with a six-month enforcement delay to allow Congress to fix DACA properly. No dice; the Democrats shut down the government over illegal aliens. It was nonsense.

Trump offered another million on top of the 800,000 in his proposal to Democrats: a pathway to citizenship for DREAMERS in exchange for funding for a border wall. Not a bad idea, but it was nixed by Democrats. Now, we had moderate Republicans quarterbacking a discharge petition, which allows bills to be brought up without going through GOP leadership. It’s forcing the House GOP to tackle immigration, something that has to be put on the backburner as we head closer towards Election Day. It needs 218 votes to be a successful push and the moderate wing seemed to be on their way.

 BREAKING: House Rs will vote on TWO daca bills next week: a conservative solution/Goodlatte and a compromise bill that HAS NOT BEEN AGREED TO. this will shut off the discharge petition. Moderates don’t appear to have the votes to get to 218 to force Dreamer bills they want

The economy is good. The jobs numbers are solid. The generic ballot advantage for the midterms is now within single-digits, but immigration could depress the base come Election Day. Also, Democrats need roughly two-dozen seats to pick-up to win back the House; that’s how many districts moderate GOPers represent and the could pick them off. The vote on the reloaded DACA and immigration bills will be held next week

"As a result of negotiations, the House will consider two bills next week that will avert the discharge petition and resolve the border security and immigration issues. The full conference will discuss tomorrow morning and we’ll have more to share at that point," said Dean DeChiaro, a spokesperson for Speaker Paul Ryan (via Politico):

House Republicans will vote next week on two bills addressing the plight of hundreds of thousands of Dreamers who face possible deportation, circumventing an intra-party war over immigration and delivering a major blow to moderate Republicans.

The floor votes will effectively stop the effort by moderate Republicans in tandem with Democrats to force a vote on their immigration plans through a so-called discharge petition. The moderates do not appear to have the 218 signatures needed to circumvent leadership and force a vote on their own bipartisan bills to codify the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

So they've been left to accept Speaker Paul Ryan's idea: One vote on a conservative proposal drafted by Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.), and a second on a compromise package still being assembled by Ryan in consultation with moderates and conservative Republicans.

Neither is expected to pass, according to Republicans in all camps.

The two-vote solution is a victory for GOP leaders, who were able to dissuade Republicans from signing the petition and triggering the bipartisan votes. Many believed the discharge petition would be a huge embarrassment to the GOP since it would likely result in passage of a bill giving citizenship to Dreamers without any major immigration crackdown demanded by most Republicans.

It's unclear if the two-vote approach will give political cover to moderates, who are extremely worried about blowback in their districts over the lack of a DACA solution. Many of the 23 GOP discharge petition signers hail from districts with large Hispanic populations who want to see a bill passed, not merely a show vote.

I still don’t get the point about playing Russian roulette with the base, but that’s the GOP I guess. If you want one issue to make Republicans stay home, it's immigration. You can't botch this and given that these bills aren’t expected to pass, what are we doing here. It’s only going to divide the party, while wasting time on other legislation that could pass, like more stringent work requirements for food stamps or cutting regulations. The time to do something on immigration this session has passed. I’m not happy about it. I want funding for the border wall. But when Democrats turned down the deal of the century on this issue, one in which even The Washington Post said DACA protections for a wall was not a bad sell, nothing was going to move. What the moderates have proposed is not acceptable to the conservative wing of the party. Will the moderate wing’s attempt to do something be rewarded come November? We’ll see, but they should have had more confidence in our economic growth to give them a legitimate and tangible selling point to voters and not whip out the cookie cutter that will split the caucus.

**Trump’s Response**

## President Donald Trump said Friday he was in the process of fighting a war with agencies like the FBI, citing their “very dishonest” behavior in their investigations.

“I’m actually proud because I beat the Clinton dynasty. I beat Bush dynasty, and now I guess hopefully I’m in the process of beating very dishonest intelligence,” Trump said.

He said the FBI betrayed both Republicans and Democrats in the 2016 presidential election.

“[W]hat they did was incredible and a real insult to millions of people that voted in that election on both sides,” Trump said.
The president repeatedly attacked Comey, calling him “the ringleader of this whole den of thieves” at the FBI and said his actions were likely “criminal.”

He also mocked Comey for using a private email address to conduct business on the investigation of Hillary Clinton’s use of private email to conduct business.

“He had a private e-mail,” Trump marveled. “That was of all the things, that wasn’t to me maybe the most interesting. But it was probably the funniest.”

He said that the Inspector General report released Thursday was “pretty good” but “blew it at the very end” by saying that the investigations [were not](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2018/06/14/ig-report-preview-james-comey-dramatically-broke-fbi-department-norms/)tainted by bias.

“The report, the IG report was a horror show,” he said. “I thought that one sentence of conclusion was ridiculous.”

Trump taunted Strzok’s [text](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2018/06/14/report-peter-strzok-vowed-we-would-stop-trump-from-becoming-president/)saying he wanted to “stop” the president.

“They said they will stop me,” he said. “In the meantime, the economy hit an all-time high this morning. Never been better.”

Trump clarified he was only criticizing the corrupt leadership at the top of the FBI, not the rank-and-file agents. He said that Comey’s replacement at the FBI would fix the problems in the agency.

“I think Christopher Wray’s a very different from Comey,” he said. “Which is what you need … and he’s moving step by step. And you’re going to see a whole new very proud FBI.”

**California Dreamin**

A plan to split California into multiple states - which was [until recently](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-10-30/california-clears-first-hurdle-effort-split-three-states) widely regarded as a Quixotic quest with little chance of success - is finally [starting to look](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-04-12/splitting-california-3-states-just-reached-important-milestone) like it could become a reality. Case in point: **This week, the campaign's backers managed to get their "radical" vision, which would divide California into three independent states, placed on the Nov. 6 ballot,** according to the [Los Angeles Times.](http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-california-split-three-states-20180612-story.html?outputType=amp) Clearing this hurdle means the measure is posing the biggest threat to California's unity in its 168-year history, Though it's hardly the first attempt to break up the massive state: Since California was admitted to the US on Sept. 9, 1850, it **has survived more than 200 breakup movements** - or secede from the US entirely. The most recent attempt, spearheaded by a Butte County lawmaker, failed in 1993.

The initiative made it to the ballot because organizers like Draper managed to **collect more than 400,000 valid signatures - enough to qualify the measure for the ballot.**However, even if a majority of California voters agree with the organizers of the campaign - a group that includes Venture Capitalist Tim Draper - its success in November would only mark only the beginning of the legal wrangling that would be required before the state can officially be broken up.

If ultimately successful, the partition of California would be the first breakup of a US state since the depths of the Civil War in 1863, when West Virginia was separated from Virginia.



Tim Draper, courtesy of the [*Associated Press*](http://www.latimes.com/politics/essential/la-pol-ca-essential-politics-updates-the-man-who-wanted-to-split-california-1503119126-htmlstory.html).

As it stands, if it succeeds at the polls, Draper and his team would start by invoking Article IV, Section 3 of the US Constitution - the provision explaining how existing states can be divided into new states. But the plan would ultimately likely require approval from both chambers of the California legislature, ***as well as an act of Congress,*** according to [Bloomberg](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-13/billionaire-draper-s-quest-to-split-up-california-makes-ballot?utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_content=tictoc&cmpid%3D=socialflow-twitter-tictoc&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter) and the [LAT](http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-california-split-three-states-20180612-story.html).

***Nothing about Draper’s historic demarcation of democracy would be easy.****Were voters to approve his ballot measure, the effort would need the blessing of both houses of the California Legislature — lawmakers who, in a sense, would be asked to abandon their posts. Draper’s proposal says the initiative, acting under California’s constitutional power of voters to write their own laws, would serve as legislative consent. It is almost certain that interpretation would end up in court.*

***From there, the plan would need congressional approval.****Here, too, politics would presumably play a major role.*

***Where California now has two seats in the 100-person U.S. Senate, the three states would have six seats in a 104-member chamber.****That would dilute the power of other states and increase the power of what used to be a single state if its six senators banded together on various issues.*

Here's an outline of the plan from a document submitted by Draper to the office of California's attorney general. In it, Draper argues that, because of the state's population and "other socio-economic factors", the state has become ***"nearly ungovernable",*** adding that vast swaths of the state are ***"poorly served by a representative government dominated by a large number of elected representatives from a small part of the state."***

*(b) The boundaries of the three (3) new states shall be as follows:*

*(1) A new state, named Northern California, or a name to be chosen by the people of that state, shall include the territory represented by the boundaries of the following forty ( 40) counties: Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Siskiyou, Shasta, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sierra, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba.*

*(2) A new state, named California, or a name to be chosen by the people of that state, shall include the territory represented by the following six ( 6) counties: Los Angeles, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura.*

*(3) A new state, named Southern California, or a name to be chosen by the people of that state, shall include the territory represented by the following twelve (12) counties: Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Tulare.*

Here's what the new states would look like:



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Initially, Draper and his backers had proposed a plan to split California into six states, but changed it to three late last year.



Map courtesy of [*NBC Bay Area*](https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/Six-Californias-Ballot-Initiative-to-Split-up-the-Golden-State-Falling-Short-on-Signatures-274916831.html)

Draper told the [LAT](http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-california-split-three-states-20180612-story.html) that three states will lead to improved education and lower taxes.

***"Three states will get us better infrastructure, better education and lower taxes,"****Tim Draper, the Silicon Valley venture capitalist who sponsored the ballot measure, said in an email to The Times last summer when he formally submitted the proposal. "States will be more accountable to us and can cooperate and compete for citizens."*

Draper's effort is also facing competition from the so-called "Calexit" proposal, a highly publicized effort to secede from the union, which its backers hope to see on the ballot in 2020.

**The plan would also likely face heated resistance from both of the two major political parties in the US.**As [Bloomberg](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-13/billionaire-draper-s-quest-to-split-up-california-makes-ballot?utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_content=tictoc&cmpid%3D=socialflow-twitter-tictoc&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter) points out, Republicans in Washington would be wary of creating more solidly blue states, and Democrats are worried that they could give Republicans an opening in Northern or Central California, according to the [LAT.](http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-california-split-three-states-20180612-story.html)

*Presidential politics also could doom the proposal once it reached Washington. Vikram Amar, a law professor who has written extensively about Draper’s plans, pointed out last fall that****the shift in California’s votes in the Electoral College - which have been awarded for a quarter-century to Democratic nominees - would be split between three states.****And one of those states, based on past election results, could be won by a Republican.*

*Amar wrote that Democrats would be****"very reluctant to run the risk" of supporting the proposal in Congress.****"And risk aversion looms large in these matters, which helps explain why no new states have been added to the United States in over 50 years, and no new state has been created out of an existing state for more than 150 years," he wrote.*

The plan hasn't received the enthusiastic support of the conservative communities located in northern California. Indeed, many see [moving to Texas](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-07-31/frustrated-california-conservatives-are-moving-texas) as a more viable option than being lumped in with the liberal Bay Area - a situation that would probably leave them in the same situation, [where their political voice is stifled](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-01-17/new-california-conservative-movement-declares-independence-first-step-towards-51st) by the larger numbers of people living in the extremely progressive cities to their south.

There's also the question of whether a ballot initiative is an appropriate way to begin the process of reviving the state's constitution.

*There also is a sizable debate about whether such a sweeping change can be created through a ballot initiative — that is, whether it rises to the level of a "revision" of the California Constitution, which can only be instigated by the Legislature or by a formal constitutional convention.****Revisions, Amar wrote in 2017, are generally seen by the courts as the most substantial kinds of changes to a government.***

***"What is of greater importance to a state than its geographic boundaries?"****Amar wrote. "As the national debate about a wall along the Mexican border rages, we are reminded that even in a digital age, physical space and physical lines matter immensely to the course of peoples’ lives, and the legal regimes under which they live."*

But the biggest reason why lawmakers would probably resist this type of breakup? It could lead to complicated negotiations over the division of natural resources like water - already a contentious topic in modern-day California.

*Critics have long wondered how citizens of a state where the majority of water supplies exist in one region would react if negotiations over new interstate compacts to share the resource turned contentious.*

**Still, Draper should at least get credit for acknowledging that there's a problem.** California alone has what would be the world's fifth-largest economy, but the state has achieved this in spite of its inept, dysfunctional government, high taxes, weak public education system and myriad other problems. But given the entrenched nature of the status quo - and looming battles over access to water that the state will likely face the state in the near future - perhaps [moving to Texas](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-07-31/frustrated-california-conservatives-are-moving-texas) really is the most practical solution for residents who are sick and tired of living in such a dysfunctional state.

**US China Trade War is a Myth**

President Donald Trump is betting Beijing will blink first in the showdown over tariffs. Such an outcome is far from assured -- and it could also take a while. When you consider what I have collated here, keep one thing in mind. Americans are the world’s consumers. The amount of America-made products you will find elsewhere in the world would rattle around in the bowels of a gnat. We buy their stuff. You like the $5 dollar shirts at WalMart? Well, that is about to change. Maybe. But one thing is for sure. You’re not going to find a successful Ford dealership in China or India. They put a 25% tariffs on our vehicles. And remember, elsewhere in the world, price is everything.

Trump said Friday the U.S. will slap duties on $50 billion in Chinese imports, with the first wave of tariffs to cover $34 billion of goods and take effect July 6. The president threatened to raise the total even higher if China retaliated, which it swiftly pledged to do. 95% of these products that we try to sell in China are already tariffed in China. The Communist Party-run government countered with a list of goods slated for tariffs, including cars and farm products, that could cause political damage for Republicans.

This is complete horse crap. Try to sell John Deere in China. Try to sell a John Deere in the US. A Mahindra, and Indian-made tractor, outsells John Deere 5 to 1 in America. Importers have saturated the US market with $10 thousand Chinese trucks that don’t last more than a couple of years and can only drive 24 miles an hour, legally, because they have no seat belts, no airbags, and no smog devices at all. American dealers pull the restrictor chips, and customers drive them all over the highway’s every day. Any crash will be fatal in one of these cheap pieces of crap. But again, price is everything to some people.

The U.S. is still showing interest in talks with Beijing.

“Our hope is that it doesn’t lead to a rash reaction from China,” U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in an interview with the Fox Business Network after the tariffs were announced. “We hope that this leads to further negotiations and we hope it leads to China changing its policies.”

The U.S. duties are intended to punish China for abusing American intellectual-property rights. This is fancy talk for what the Chinese called “Technology Transfer Policies.” You transfer your technology to China, and you can sell your products in China. I know this for a fact, because I have been I those exact meetings along with the US Ambassador to China under the Obama Administration. All of us lost our technologies and never sold a single thing in China. When I complained to the Department of Commerce, they laughed at me on the phone. Laughed.

Trump also has signaled he wants to reduce America’s $376-billion trade deficit in goods with China. He has already made an impact.

Much depends on how far Trump is willing to go to reach his goals. He has already threatened to put tariffs on an additional $100 billion in Chinese goods. U.S. officials are close to completing the list of products that would cover that amount, according to two people briefed on the matter, meaning the administration could escalate the conflict on short notice. The administration says it’s developing restrictions on Chinese investment and will release proposals on June 30.

“The question is, does the Trump administration really want to negotiate with China, or just draw blood and only after that start a serious negotiation with the Chinese?” said Scott Kennedy, deputy director of China studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

 Here are two plain and simple facts:

1. Foreign countries pay American news actors to promulgate anti-tariff propaganda.
2. China has ten times the debt-to-GDP ratio than America had prior to the Great Depression. One misstep, and their entire economy will avalanche down on the government within hours. A run on the banks in China would last about one hour. They would be bankrupt. Trump knows exactly what he is doing.

*That being said, the propaganda press will do its best to educate you on how terrible President Trump’s strategy is going to be. Here are four scenarios that could come to pass in the coming weeks and months:*
**1. Both Sides Back Down**
Less than a month ago, this seemed possible. Following talks between the two powers in Washington, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the administration was “putting the trade war on hold” and wouldn’t impose tariffs. Hope grew that the U.S. would accept a modest increase in purchases by China of American products. But within days, the president backed away from the framework for the talks.

A short-term truce now seems unlikely. On Friday, a senior administration official said the U.S. is looking for structural changes to the way China deals with technology. The administration wants Beijing to stop forcing American firms to transfer know-how. Beijing has signaled it won’t accept major changes to its Made-in-China 2025 blueprint, which lays out how the Asian nation plans to lead in emerging industries such as artificial intelligence.

**2. China Blinks**
President Xi Jinping has defended the existing global trade order. Certainly, China has a lot at stake. For years, state-driven investment and exports drove growth. Xi’s government is trying to engineer a gradual slowdown that puts more emphasis on consumer spending. A trade war could disrupt Beijing’s careful management of the economy, which showed signs of underperformance in May.

In the best-case scenario for the U.S., China would back down on technology issues and open its market to more American goods and services. “If you’re a trade negotiator, in some sense, having President Trump is a great advantage because everybody knows he will impose tariffs and that gives the trade negotiator a lot of leverage,” said Rod Hunter, a partner at law firm Baker McKenzie and former director of international economics at the White House National Security Council under President George W. Bush.

**3. U.S. Blinks**
Trump prides himself on his negotiating prowess. He co-authored a book called “The Art of the Deal,” in which Trump describes how he extracted concessions in real-estate transactions.

But the jury is still out on Trump’s negotiating record as president. The U.S. push to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement is in limbo. Critics say Trump gained little from his high-profile meeting this week with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. It’s quite possible China may call Trump’s bluff, knowing how much the president enjoys a rising stock market and strong U.S. economy.

China’s list of products designated for tariffs includes a range of agricultural items like soybeans, sorghum and cotton, a potential blow to rural states that backed Trump in the 2016 presidential election.

“What Trump is signaling here is that he wants to not only continue negotiations, but he’d actually like to have them resolved in the short term rather than the long term,” Terry Haines, managing director and head of political analysis at Evercore ISI, told Bloomberg Television.

**4. All-out Trade War**
There’s reason to believe the U.S. and China won’t solve this soon -- and things could escalate quickly. Neither side wants to be seen as weak. Trump rode to power on his appeal in Rust Belt states hit hard by globalization. With midterm elections in Congress in November, he’s under pressure to appease his political base. Turning China into a global technology leader is a key part of Xi’s long-term strategic plan.

If Trump pushes for systemic changes to China’s basic economic model, the world could be in store for a long period of tensions between the two nations. Past U.S. administrations have urged Beijing to loosen control of industries as steelmaking, with little effect.

Bloomberg Economics estimates a trade war would have a limited direct impact on growth in both countries. But that could change if the conflict hurts business and consumer confidence.

“A trade war can be anything from a minor skirmish to a full-blown battle, with lots of collateral damage to American workers, farmers and consumers,” said Michael Smart, managing director at Rock Creek Global Advisors in Washington and a former international trade director on the National Security Council. “We’re not there yet, but it’s scary, because it seems like we’re on a path toward major conflict, and it’s hard to see the off ramp.”

**Ocean’s 8**

Stars of [Ocean’s 8](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/jun/13/oceans-8-review-sandra-bullock-cate-blanchett-anne-hathaway), the heist movie featuring all-female leads, have accused male critics of failing to appreciate their film.

Speaking to Yahoo Movies, Mindy Kaling called the dominance of white male reviewers “unfair”. “If I had to base my career on what white men wanted I would be very unsuccessful, so there is obviously an audience out there who want to watch things like [Ocean’s 8], what I work on, what Sarah [Paulson] works on.”

Co-star [Cate Blanchett](https://www.theguardian.com/film/cate-blanchett) concurred, saying the media had failed to make the mindshift the movie industry had when it came to gender equality. “The conversation has to change,” she said, “and the media has a huge responsibility.” I have to say that it is really sad that reviews even matter, but believe me, they do. I sell books, and when I see how many thousands of people have bought my books, but how few take the time to go back and write a review, it gives me a rash. People who don’t know me, need to know what you know. So, if you have read my books, please take 5 minutes and go write a review; and make it a good one.

 A [study](https://annenberg.usc.edu/news/research/report-critiques-inclusion-among-film-critics) by [USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative](https://annenberg.usc.edu/research/aii) was released earlier this week, examining the gender and ethnic profile of US critics who wrote about last year’s 100 most successful films found 80% were men and 82% white.

Such makeup was well-known, said Blanchett, but only belatedly being raised. “When you start pointing that stuff out you realise there’s a certain gaze that looks at women.”

Kaling referred to Meryl Streep’s [attack](https://www.thewrap.com/meryl-streep-rips-rotten-tomatoes-for-infuriating-lack-of-female-critics/) on reviews aggregate site Rotten Tomatoes, which she felt prioritised the views of men. Promoting the film Suffragette in 2015, Streep said she felt the ratio adversely affected ticket sales for female-skewed films.

“I submit to you that men and women are not the same, they like different things,” she said. “Sometimes they like the same thing, but sometimes their tastes diverge. If the Tomatometer is slighted so completely to one set of tastes that drives box office in the United States, absolutely.”

On the subject of Ocean’s 8, Kaling said: “And the thing about so much of what this movie is, I think white men, critics would enjoy it, would enjoy my work, but often I think there is a critic who will damn it in a way because they don’t understand it, because they come at it at a different point of view, and they’re so powerful, [Rotten Tomatoes](https://www.theguardian.com/film/rotten-tomatoes).”

The spin-off from Steven Soderbergh’s Ocean’s Eleven film and its two sequels has so far avoided the backlash that met Paul Feig’s gender-flipped Ghostbusters film two years ago. It topped the US box office last weekend, fuelled by an audience that was 69% female, and beat the receipts of Ocean’s Eleven and its two sequels (although the numbers were not adjusted for inflation).

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/dialog/share?app_id=180444840287&href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theguardian.com%2Ffilm%2F2018%2Fjun%2F15%2Foceans-8-dominance-men-film-reviews%3FCMP%3Dshare_btn_fb%26page%3Dwith%3Aimg-2%23img-2&picture=https%3A%2F%2Fmedia.guim.co.uk%2F36c49bd63eea93903bbc7ca4cb8e2e93de5299b8%2F0_0_6000_3599%2F6000.jpg)[Twitter](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Ocean%27s%208%20stars%20blame%20dominance%20of%20male%20critics%20for%20film%27s%20mixed%20reviews&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theguardian.com%2Ffilm%2F2018%2Fjun%2F15%2Foceans-8-dominance-men-film-reviews%3FCMP%3Dshare_btn_tw%26page%3Dwith%3Aimg-2%23img-2)[Pinterest](http://www.pinterest.com/pin/create/button/?description=Ocean%27s%208%20stars%20blame%20dominance%20of%20male%20critics%20for%20film%27s%20mixed%20reviews&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theguardian.com%2Ffilm%2F2018%2Fjun%2F15%2Foceans-8-dominance-men-film-reviews%3Fpage%3Dwith%3Aimg-2%23img-2&media=https%3A%2F%2Fmedia.guim.co.uk%2F36c49bd63eea93903bbc7ca4cb8e2e93de5299b8%2F0_0_6000_3599%2F6000.jpg)

 ‘I don’t need a 40-year-old white dude to tell me what didn’t work,’ said Brie Larson. Photograph: Emma McIntyre/Getty

On Wednesday, the actor Brie Larson, who [won an Oscar](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2016/feb/29/brie-larson-wins-best-actress-oscar-for-room) for her role in kidnap drama Room, [announced](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/sundance-toronto-allocate-20-percent-credentials-underrepresented-critics-says-brie-larson-1120068) an initiative by the Sundance and Toronto film festivals to allocate 20% of their journalist passes to critics from under represented groups.

A number of journalists have taken issue with the sentiment that someone’s gender and ethnic background dictates your response to art. Variety’s Guy Lodge, who also writes for the Guardian and Observer,[pointed out](https://twitter.com/GuyLodge)that a number of female critics – including [Time’s Stephanie Zacharek](http://time.com/5303837/review-oceans-8/) and [Vulture’s Emily Yoshida](http://www.vulture.com/2018/06/oceans-8-review.html) and – have concurred with the general lukewarm response to Ocean’s 8.

Meanwhile, Buzzfeed’s Alison Willmore [protested](https://twitter.com/alisonwillmore) that such logic missed the real objective – for more diversity in all professions – and set a dangerous precedent. What this really means, is that only female critics of color will be published. Sounds so, Democrat-ish, doesn’t it?

**Theranos Founder is Charged with Wire Fraud**

You remember my report on Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes and Ramesh “Sunny” Balwani, the medical tech start-up’s former president? I explained how they ran elaborate press releases and repackaged other company’s technologies in slick demonstrations to misrepresent their revolution in medical testing. I told you that the SEC usually puts people in jail for even slightly defrauding investors. They hugely defrauded investors out of billions. She used her beauty and deep voice to scam the reporters into thinking she was the 29-year-old super genius that was going to cure the high-cost of medical testing. Well, I also told you how she had the Charm of Favor because when she got her billions, she generously shared it with Hillary Clinton. That’s how you get the grants in the first place, you know. You make the pledge. You follow through with the commitment, and then you get more money. Just ask Harvey Weinstein. It works, until there is a new sheriff in town.

Well, the pretty Miss Holmes and her buddy Balwani have been indicted on two counts of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and nine counts of wire fraud, the Justice Department announced Friday. That’s how they get you, when your usefulness to Hillary has run out. Just ask Harvey.

She will be very old, and not so pretty when she gets out of Federal prison.

**Stormy’s Storm is Turning**

## Porn actress Stormy Daniels stormed out of a Chicago strip club during the first of five shows, Thursday, claiming she was fired by the club’s management and forcing the cancelation of her slate of sold-out weekend shows. Sold out? That’s a first. Even for Stormy. She had planned on working the poles for the DNC, but that gig isn’t going to draw much of an audience this year. And, the huge amount of cash she got from Cohen is already spent. And the GoFundMe account just got seized by her bankrupt slip-and-fall attorney, Avaretti.

Daniels was reportedly uncooperative and walked out of the Admiral Theater in the middle of a performance the *Chicago Reader*[reported](http://chicagoreader.com/%E2%80%A6/stormy-daniels-storms-out-of-chicago-strip-club-amid-dispute-i-got-fired-she-says-as-weekend-shows-appear-canceled). You see, Stephanie Clifford—stat’s her real and unremarkable name—left a lot of fans flaccid and dry over the dispute.

After jiggling about the stage to only a few songs, the notorious entertainer left the venue before attending a meet-and-greet leaving fans who paid to meet her for photos out of their $20 entry fee. Others are out even more money as tickets for some of the upcoming shows were selling for as much as $600 on Craigslist.

As Daniels was being escorted out of the building by two security guards, she told those outside the theater she was fired, but the owner and founder of Admiral Theatre, Sam Cecola, disputes that characterization of their disagreement. Cecola claims that Daniels was uncooperative from the start and skipped rehearsals and meetings with him and his staff.

“This . . . whatever you want to call her . . . comes into the place and makes everyone wait and didn’t rehearse. Last time she was here was eight years ago, we were a different theater then, we remodeled since then. She didn’t see the stage layout,” he [told](http://chicagoreader.com/%E2%80%A6/stormy-daniels-storms-out-of-chicago-strip-club-amid-dispute-i-got-fired-she-says-as-weekend-shows-appear-canceled) the *Reader*. Cecola also insisted that Daniels was rude to the theater’s house dancers, and then abruptly tried to re-negotiate the contract for a higher percentage of the box office take at the last minute. Ain’t just the way of a whore right before the happy ending?

Daniels reportedly told Cecola that she agreed to a much lower fee for the Admiral than she gets elsewhere and insisted that a larger take from merchandise sales and other areas of the theater’s earnings should be her due. But the theater owner disagreed.

“I’ve been in this business for almost 50 years,” he said, “before Donald Trump I’d never even heard of her. She was here eight years ago, and was totally unremarkable.”

You get that? Unremarkable in the stripping business is pretty bad. No talent. People wanted the selfie, because of Trump, not because of her. She may still be a good fit for working the poles of the DNC in November, unless she tries to renegotiate the deal.

**Bilderberg Undone**

On the first day of my new job as a hotel waitress — before I have a chance to polish a glass or proffer a canapé — I’m primed in detail about how to enter the building. Not via the front foyer, but circuitously through a ‘secret staff entrance’.

It is imperative I memorise the route, I’m told by the briskly efficient restaurant manager, who steers me through it, via an obscure door by a KFC outlet in a low-rent shopping mall.

We then travel up two floors in a shabby service lift, past a phalanx of security men, through an underground delivery area, past bins, a staff canteen and along a harshly lit subterranean corridor that smells of urine.

Another staff lift disgorges us into the hotel kitchen, through two swing doors and finally into the light and bustle of its restaurant and gleaming lobby.

It is vital that I take this labyrinthine route in and out of the hotel for the next five days, I’m told, as there is a ‘top secret event’ taking place. ‘The whole hotel is closed to the public,’ says my boss. ‘It’s very important you remember you cannot go in and out of the main entrance. You must use the secret one.’

Although I feign meek subservience, I know very well why levels of security have been ramped up to such histrionic levels at this unassuming four-star hotel in northern Italy, because I am here undercover. My mission is to covertly observe the most secretive gathering of the influential and powerful in the world, known as the Bilderberg Group.

This cabal of the global, largely liberal, elite — with strong ties to the EU — meets every year amid a cloak of secrecy.

At this year’s gathering? With so-called ‘populism’ high on its agenda, passionate Remainers, including former Home Secretary Amber Rudd, Bank of England Governor Mark Carney and former Chancellor George Osborne, all took time out of their busy schedules to attend.

Over drinks receptions and lavish meals, they rubbed shoulders with former president of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, three serving EU prime ministers and a current European Commissioner in charge of the bloc’s budget.

Last weekend, the Mail became the first newspaper in the 64-year history of Bilderberg to penetrate its formidable security, gaining insight into the extreme paranoia of this most elusive of clubs.

I watched as military police guarded the hotel perimeter and sniffer dogs checked for bombs outside. Last week, one freelance journalist, who posted footage online of the empty garden marquee where the Bilderberg banquet was due to be held, reported that Italian police stormed his hotel room at 4.30am breaking down his door and ‘pointing a gun’ at him.

So clandestine are the Bilderberg gatherings that no minutes are taken, no press conferences given and no reports published.

The conference operates under ‘Chatham House Rules’, which means participants can use and report information exchanged there, but not disclose the source. But with no record of what goes on — Bilderberg was held on exactly the same weekends as G7 and NATO defense meetings, allowing opportunities for conference calls — critics have said it should be much more transparent. Many argue that the event exists solely to serve as a networking and lobbying opportunity for its attendees.

The Bilderberg Group — so called because it first met in 1954 at the Hotel Bilderberg in the Netherlands — is made up of at least 120 self-proclaimed ‘leading citizens’ of Europe and the U.S., who meet annually to discuss ‘issues of common interest’.

Every summer, figureheads from politics, business, academia, finance and defense lock themselves away in a closely guarded hotel for three days to discuss topics of vital global significance about which the rest of us can only speculate.

Hypothesis and conjecture about the content of their talks inevitably abound. At one extreme there are conspiracy theorists who believe that the hounding from office of Margaret Thatcher, the downfall of U.S. President Richard Nixon and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy were all secretly orchestrated by the Bilderberg Group.

The roll-call of attendees is invariably auspicious. Prime ministers, royalty — Prince Charles and Prince Philip have both attended — army generals, corporate CEOs and bank governors all make time in their busy schedules to be there.

### THE BILDERBERG CONFERENCE 2018 AGENDA AND ATTENDEES

TOP of the Agenda at this year’s Bilderberg Meeting was ‘Populism in Europe’ – evidence of populism’s impact as it’s swept across Europe and America. It is surely no coincidence that Bilderberg took place in Turin, Italy, where the populist Five Star Movement and anti-immigrant League parties’ coalition threatens the stability and future of the European Union altogether. And as Donald Trump continues to blaze a trail through his Presidency, the Bilderberg group was also keen to discuss ‘US world leadership’ and ‘The US before midterms’.

There was a significant European Union representation in Turin last week, with Jose Manuel Barroso, former president of the European Commission (and now non-executive chairman of Goldman Sachs) toasting his membership in the Bilderberg club with four serving EU Prime Ministers – Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Ana Brnabic, Prime Minister of Serbia, Charles Michel, Prime Minister of Belgium and Jüri Ratas, Prime Minister of Estonia. They were joined by Spain’s deputy PM, Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría and Turkey’s deputy PM, Mehmet Simsek. Former Prime Minister of France, Bernard Cazeneuve, also flew out for the shindig, as did Günther H. Oettinger, Commissioner for budget and human resources at the European Commission.

Bilderberg says it exists as ‘a forum… to foster dialogue between Europe and North America’, and American VIPs always take time out of their busy schedules to attend Bilderberg. Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State and National Security Advisor under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, has been attending Bilderberg on and off since 1957. Last weekend he made the trip out to Turin, in a wheelchair accompanied by minders, at the age of 95. David Petraeus, former director of the CIA, made an appearance alongside him, as did John Hickenlooper, Governor of Colorado. Representing the incumbent United States government were Matthew Turpin, the National Security Council’s Director for China, and James H. Baker, the director of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Many of America’s most prestigious universities attended the Bilderberg meeting including the Universities of Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Pennsylvania, Princeton, New York University and the American University. Think-tanks included the Hudson Institute and the Hoover Institution.

Figureheads from many industries including defence, communications, finance, business, politics, banking and academia are always represented at Bilderberg, but this year has truly been that of the technology titans. Bilderberg seems exceptionally keen to explore automation and the robotics, listing ‘The future of work’, ‘Artificial intelligence’ and ‘quantum computing’ as events on its Agenda. The 2018 cohort included the co-founder of LinkedIn, the CEO of Vodafone and the director of Harvard-MIT Ethics and Governance of AI Initiative.

Eric Schmidt, the former executive chairman of Google, has attended Bilderberg before and Google was the star of the show this year. Hartmut Neven, director of engineering of Google Inc. was in attendance alongside Demis Hassabis, the British co-founder and CEO of its AI branch DeepMind. They were joined by Jared Cohen, founder and CEO of Jigsaw at Alphabet (Google’s parent company). Cohen was formerly US on the Secretary of State's policy planning staff as an advisor to Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Clinton. Bilderberg also invited experts and consultancies in the wider fields of Artificial Intelligence, such as Harvard-MIT Ethics and Governance of AI Initiative and PA Consulting Group, which specialises in AI.

Shifting sands in the Middle East and recent furore surrounding Russia were enough to garner places on the Agenda, with ‘Saudi Arabia and Iran’ and ‘Russia’ both listed. The Bilderberg Conference took place on exactly the same weekend as the G7 summit and the NATO Defence Meeting this year. Some speculate that conference calls took place between the three, but Bilderberg never releases details, minutes or reports of what is discussed other than its vague agenda list.

This year’s cohort of Britons included Sir John Sawers, former head of MI6, and Marcus Agius, who resigned from Barclays Bank following the Libor rate-fixing scandal — both former trustees of the Bilderberg Association.

Ryanair boss Michael O’Leary flew in alongside academics from Oxbridge, UCL and the LSE. They mingled with heads of international bodies including NATO, the World Economic Forum and UNESCO and, for the first time in its history, a Vatican representative.

Sitting cheek-by-jowl with the traditional establishment is the new power elite: the technology titans. The 2018 cohort include the co-founder of LinkedIn and the CEO of Vodafone. Google is well-represented: present this year are its director of engineering, the founder of its sister company Jigsaw and the CEO of DeepMind, a British artificial intelligence company.

I’m told by a manager on my first day: ‘It is a top event. It is like the G7 — people from all over the world. The Fiat boss. You can’t tell anyone what goes on here, all the staff are completely sworn to secrecy.’

I’m told not to engage in conversation with these special guests and instead to ‘look down’.

Last week’s meeting in Turin was hosted by Fiat-Chrysler Automobiles, owned by the wealthy Agnelli family dynasty, which housed delegates in a hotel converted from its former Fiat car factory.

Unlike previous Bilderberg meetings, which have been held high up in the Alps or in remote chateaux, this year’s conference is, audaciously, hidden in plain sight.

The NH Lingotto shares space with a run-down shopping centre — the location of that secret staff entrance — itself surrounded by 10ft concrete walls, and the main hotel entrance is accessible only through a police check point. Inside, as guards swarm the lobby and staff are kitted out with walkie-talkies, I’m frequently left to my own devices. Nevertheless, the NH Hotel Group said it ‘takes the security of its guests very seriously’.

I wander around, exploring the store rooms, staff areas and the main switchboard for the entire hotel, surveying wires and buttons from floor to ceiling.

In spite of ferocious security efforts, if I was someone with nefarious intentions I could have done something pretty terrible by now.

On my first day, I’m given a staff master-key with access to all 240 guest rooms.

As I work methodically through each, supplying it with mineral water and a fruit bowl ready for the arrival of its VIP inhabitant, I wonder — could I be preparing this for Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands? Or perhaps Ryanair’s Michael O’Leary? Or even for American statesman Henry Kissinger? On Thursday afternoon at the hotel, minutes before the first delegates arrive, the tension in the foyer is palpable.

Outside, I survey the dozens of suited security and hotel staff, many with ear pieces, some virtually bouncing on the soles of their shoes. No one speaks. They all just wait in position.

Many of the VIPs arrive in private jets at Turin private airport, from where they are driven with police escorts — blue lights flashing, but no sirens — to the hotel.

A flurry of hotel staff greet the disembarking VIPs, while more staff with hotel-branded umbrellas shield them from the lashing rain.

A polite American man approaches me. ‘Excuse me, where’s the bar around here?’ he asks. I clock his name badge: David Petraeus, former director of the CIA and commander of the United States Central Command, as I ask him what he’d like to drink.

‘Which red wines do you have?’ he asks, at which point I remember I’m not actually bar trained; I’ve no idea where the wine was even kept, let alone which vintage to recommend. I have to summon help.

Then a room service errand takes me up to an Italian delegate’s room. He has ordered five bottles of mineral water and one glass to use for each bottle. As soon as the door is halfway open, he barks: ‘Still, I ordered still! Not sparkling!’ I’m relieved I have a colleague with me who assures him: ‘But this is still, sir.’

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**Four of the yellow cards given to guests, where they talked about 'populism in Europe', 'Whither free trade' and other subjects. In each ‘evaluation form’, the delegates must rate each talk on a scale of one to five on factors including ‘importance topic’, ‘quality panellist’, ‘interaction’ and so on**

I arrive back downstairs to see a much-diminished Henry Kissinger being escorted in a wheelchair across the marbled floor by two suited men.

At 95, Mr Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State, is one of Bilderberg’s oldest and most regular delegates. The alleged war criminal has been attending intermittently since 1957.

Demis Hassabis, the British computer game designer behind Google’s DeepMind, then asks me for directions to the ‘dinner’. Improvising, I direct him vaguely down the corridor.

A jovial man in glasses also approaches me to ask where ‘the conference’ is. It is Jose Manuel Barroso, former president of the European Commission, now chairman of Goldman Sachs International. He is surrounded by four people all clamouring to talk to him, and he looks like the cat that got the cream.

All attendees are also given yellow paper ‘score cards’ on which they must give TripAdvisor-style self-evaluation assessments of talks. On each form delegates must rate discussions on a scale of one to five including ‘importance of topic’, ‘quality of panelist’, ‘interaction’ and so on.

The discussions include such subjects as: ‘Populism In Europe’, ‘The U.S. Before Mid-Terms’ (in other words, Donald Trump) ‘The Future Of Work’, ‘Jobs, Skills, Wages’ and ‘Whither Free Trade?’ — plus the more ambiguous ‘Where Are We?’



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**The gifts included Italian toiletries, a coffee-table art book with foreword from the Agnelli family, and mints branded with sketches of the Lingotto Fiat building**

One hot topic currently dominating the agenda in Europe — immigration — was noticeable by its absence. And, as with so many corporate jamborees, each attendee is given a blue-and-white goodie-bag at the end, tagged with the message: ‘A gift from the Italian hosts of Bilderberg thanks to the generosity of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles.’

Inside are Italian toiletries, a coffee-table art book with foreword from the Agnelli family, and mints branded with sketches of the Lingotto Fiat building.

### The Bilderberg hotel

The NH Lingotto hotel, location of this year’s Bilderberg Conference, is housed within the Lingotto building – the site of the former Fiat factory, with a rooftop racetrack seen in The Italian Job.

The colossal building, with views of the Alps, features a distinctive ‘bubble’ rooftop meeting room and helipad designed by architect Renzo Piano, as well as a ‘sunken auditorium’ concert hall elsewhere in the old factory.

The Lingotto building is owned by the wealthy Agnelli Family Dynasty, the industrialists who created Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. Gianni Agnelli reportedly attended Bilderberg 37 times before his death and was good friends with Henry Kissinger, seen as a ‘Bilderberg ringleader’.

Kissinger once said: ‘During the last two decades of his life, no one was closer to me than Gianni Agnelli.’ Kissinger is the godfather of John Elkann, Agnelli’s grandson.

The 42-year-old heir to the Fiat Fortune was the host of the 2018 Bilderberg Meeting and sits on its decision-making Steering Committee. Elkann is chairman and chief executive of Exor, the Agnelli family’s investment company, to which former Chancellor of the Exchequer and current Editor of the Evening Standard George Osborne was recently appointed just days ago. John Elkann also sits on The Economist board alongside Eric Schmidt, former executive chairman of Google, and Sir Simon Robertson, the Deputy Chairman of HSBC.

Simon Robertson Associates LLP is the registered address of The Bilderberg Association, a tax-exempt charity and the UK financial arm of Bilderberg. The most recently listed trustees of Bilderberg Association were Zanny Minton Beddoes, editor-in-chief of The Economist, and Lord John Kerr of Kinlochard, deputy chairman of Royal Dutch Shell. Last night the Charity Commission said it had ‘opened a case’ into Bilderberg Association to ensure it was complying with its transparency criteria.

Bilderberg presents an abundance of networking opportunities for those lucky enough to be chosen to attend. Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England, is due to step down from his role next year and has ambitions to head the International Monetary Fund. Michael O’Leary’s contract with Ryanair also ends next year.

George Osborne, the editor of the Evening Standard, possesses seven other job titles. At Bilderberg, he will have had ample chance to speak to his business contacts.

He was recently appointed chair of a business council at Exor, the holding company for the Agnelli family billions. John Elkann, the Agnelli heir who hosted this year’s Bilderberg, sits on the Economist board alongside Eric Schmidt of Google. A spokesman for Bilderberg Meetings said that ‘participants take care of their own travel and accommodation costs’.

He added: ‘The expenses of maintaining the small secretariat of Bilderberg Meetings are covered wholly by private subscription. The hospitality costs of the annual meeting are the responsibility of the steering committee member(s) of the host country.’ But it would not confirm who pays into this ‘private subscription’.

Amber Rudd, a member of the Queen’s Privy Council, refused to answer any of our questions including whether she divulged state-secret information at the conference. Nor did she say whether she will fully declare her attendance at Bilderberg, both financially and as a potential conflict of interest, as stipulated in the House of Commons Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament.

Last night, the Charity Commission said it was probing the UK financial arm of Bilderberg following the Mail’s investigation. As a registered charity, the Bilderberg Association is exempt from tax, but the Commission said it had received a ‘number of complaints about its activities’.

The charity’s most recently listed trustees are Lord John Kerr of Kinlochard, deputy chairman of Royal Dutch Shell, and Zanny Minton Beddoes, editor-in-chief of The Economist — which yesterday published an editorial leader entitled: ‘A hard Brexit seems ever less likely: Good.’

To legally qualify for charity status, the organisation must overwhelmingly serve a ‘public benefit’, and not a political purpose.

The Bilderberg Association says its purpose is ‘the education’ of ‘mankind, the public’. But because no public reports are published into what actually happens at the conference, there is no way of proving this charitable public purpose.

The Commission said it was opening a case into the Bilderberg Association ‘to ensure its activities are in line with its charitable objects and its legal duty’ and remind it of ‘the importance of transparency’.

A spokesman said it was a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information to the Commission.

Lord Kerr said he was ‘not a trustee’ and directed queries to the address where the charity is registered, Simon Robertson Associates, a financial advisory group run by the former director of Goldman Sachs. Sir Simon Robertson is also on the board of the Economist.

The Bilderberg Association declined to comment, while Ms Minton Beddoes referred us to Bilderberg Meetings, the global company.

For three days I’ve stood on the periphery watching, listening. But ultimately the world’s most secretive meeting remains elusive; a distant babble of voices a few metres away from me along a corridor in a closed room. Near, but infuriatingly just too far away to discern.

So for another year Bilderberg has retained its mystique; its impenetrable secrecy; its elitism. And we mere mortals, unseen and unremarked, are none the wiser.

## The Bilderberg conference: Military-level security and hostility to press

The Bilderberg Group holds its meetings cloaked in secrecy far away from the prying eyes of the general public. Local police, state police and even the military of whichever country has been selected to host the Meeting are on hand to keep out the riff-raff. Fences, barricades and police checkpoints are erected, and metal detectors and X-Rays search anyone attempting to enter the ‘Bilderberg Hotel’. As one reporter who covered the event says: ‘You know Bilderberg’s about to begin when you start seeing the guns.’

The Bilderberg Group are notoriously camera shy, and take extreme measures to prevent journalists from capturing what it discusses – including following them, intimidating them and detaining them. In 1999, journalist Jon Ronson attempted to report on Bilderberg in Sintra, Portugal, and managed to get inside the Conference’s perimeter. Ronson later found himself ‘chased by mysterious men in dark glasses through Portugal’ and described being scared for his safety.

‘When I phoned the British embassy and asked them to explain to the powerful secret society that had set their goons on me that I was essentially a humorous journalist out of my depth, I wasn't being funny’, he wrote. ‘I was being genuinely desperate.’

The British Embassy told him they there was nothing they could do. Ten years later, journalist Charlie Skelton was arrested half a mile from the Bilderberg hotel in Vouliagmeni, Greece.

He described being approached by a ‘man with the machine gun’ and a group of police who ‘circled round me… prodding me in the shoulder, and shouting: "Give the camera! Just give the camera!" He was driven to the local police station and released after they’d verified his identity. Later, he was arrested a second time for taking more photographs, and said he was followed in Greece for days by plainclothes policemen.

Last Tuesday freelance journalist Josh Friedman entered the oasis-garden of the NH Lingotto Hotel where the Bilderberg Meeting was due to be held, and posted online footage of the empty marquee before the conference. He described how days later, Italian police burst into his hotel room at 4.00am, demanding to see his documents.

He said: ‘I was lying in bed, it’s dark, I heard a lot of noise coming up through the stairwell… Then suddenly my door flew open and five officers burst into the apartment.

‘They flicked on the light switch and at least one was pointing a gun at me as I was lying in bed.’ He said the police asked him for his name and documents. Later they apologised and said they been looking for a ‘suspect’ who they believed had been in Freidman’s room. When the Bilderberg Conference was held at the five-star Grove hotel in Watford, Hertfordshire in 2013, Hertfordshire Constabulary revealed that policing alone cost £1million.

There was also a large G4S presence, fences, a no-fly zone and further anti-terror measures. Bilderberg offered to pay up to £500,000 towards this cost, but Hertfordshire Police appealed to the Home Office – and the taxpayer - to cover the shortfall. Bilderberg says that attendees cover their own cost of transport, and that the Steering Committee and host country pays for the Conference each time it is held there.

But it is unclear how publicly-funded figures, such as elected politicians and Royalty, pay for and declare their Bilderberg attendance. Bilderberg also states that ‘Bilderberg Meetings are covered wholly by private subscription’, but does not give further details as to who pays this private subscription nor by how much.

**The EU Change is About to happen**

German MP Kai Whittaker, a CDU member, said Merkel's clashes with Seehofer - who is demanding that German border police be given the right to turn back migrants without identity papers or who are already registered elsewhere in the European Union - are threatening to bring about "a new political situation. ***And probably a new chancellor.***"

As Whittaker astutely points out, the political crisis stems from the fact that the issue of immigration has become "a power question".  The AfD, [which outperformed expectations](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-09-24/merkel-wins-german-election-afd-enters-parliament-after-late-surge) during Germany's fall elections, owes its rise largely to its anti-asylum stance. And as the chaos builds, Whittaker explained that German lawmakers are largely in the dark about what is happening with the leadership.

*"****We are in a serious situation****because the question of the migration crisis evolved into a power question...the question is who is leading the Government?****Is it Angela Merkel or is it Horst Seehofer? Everybody seems to be standing firm and that's the problem."***

*[...]*

*There is a master plan to solve the migration crisis, which consists of 63 ideas of Horst Seehofer.*

Wittaker also pointed out that Seehofer's clashes with Merkel could be linked to upcoming local elections in Bavaria, where the conservative party is concerned about retaining a majority.

*"This must have to do with the coming election in Bavaria because it is vital for the Conservatives to win an overall majority because that’s why they have a national importance."*

*"This kind of has the potential to diminish the authority of her and Horst Seehofer****and it could well be that at the end of next week we have a new situation.*****Probably a new Chancellor.***"*

Merkel has opposed what she sees as Seehofer's heavy handed approach toward immigration, and has held meetings with members of her party seeking support for her failing asylum policies, which brought more than 1 million migrants to Germany in 2015, [leading to a spike in violent assaults](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2016-01-07/monsters-revealed-cologne-cops-say-most-attackers-were-refugees). **However, many of Merkel's allies are even demanding changes to her "open door" policy regarding migrants.** Seehofer's plan would replace an existing EU rule, which would allow Germany to send the asylum-seekers back to the first EU state they entered. For now, the coalition agreement is still in place. But if the German government collapses, or looks to be headed that way, expect even more volatility in the euro - and by extension, more strength for the US dollar ([and pain for emerging markets](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-06-14/emerging-markets-massacred-dovish-draghi-sends-dollar-soaring)).