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| --- |
| Jihad ReportApr 18, 2020 -Apr 24, 2020 |
| Attacks | **39** |
| Killed | **188** |
| Injured | **125** |
| Suicide Blasts | **0** |
| Countries | **10** |



**To Be or Not to Be**

Americans across the country may be wondering why it’s so easy for abortion activists to oppose legislation that would protect newborn babies from infanticide. That’s because they don’t believe that newborn infants are actually people.

This week, a North Carolina legislative committee approved a bill to protect newborns who survive abortions from infanticide. The vote follows another by the Texas Senate on legislation that also requires appropriate medical care for babies who survive abortions.

Senate Bill 359 requires doctors to provide the same care to an infant that survives an abortion as they give any other newborn. It includes a duty for health care practitioners to report any violations, and it makes those violations a class D felony, the same category as arson, armed robbery and voluntary manslaughter.

But one abortion advocate in the state opposes the bill. Calla Hales is an abortion activist who is on the board of directors of the North Carolina affiliate of NARAL (**National Abortion Rights Action League)**. She is also the director of Preferred Women’s Health Clinics, a chain of abortion clinics in North Carolina and Georgia. Hales doesn’t believe that newborn babies immediately after birth are legal persons. She claims that’s the case because an infant younger than 30 days old cannot be added to a will in the state. By the way, minors under 18 can’t purchase alcohol or vote either but that doesn’t take away from their status as persons under law.

Hales made the comments on a tweet that she took offline immediately after she came under criticism on Twitter. She eventually protected her account to make the tweet not visible to the public but Alexandra DeSanctis of National Review captured a screenshot of it before it went private.

Well she has now protected her account after claiming newborn infants can’t be legal persons. So that’s that, I guess. But screenshots are forever, of course. Hales’ comments are horrific, but they are not surprising given that abortion activist are consistently opposing legislation to protect babies who survive abortions. And the comment is not surprising from Hales given that killing babies in abortions is a family business.

The North Carolina and Texas bills are similar to federal legislation that pro-abortion Democrats are blocking in the U.S. House and Senate. The Born Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act requires abortionists to provide the same level of medical care to an infant who survives an abortion as a doctor would to any other baby at the same stage of life.

Currently, 19 State legislatures have opposed laws requiring medical care for babies born alive after botched abortions, according to research by Americans United for Life. However, Kentucky lawmakers are considering legislation similar to the Texas bill.

Some states never have passed laws to protect abortion survivors, while at least one other, New York, recently repealed its law requiring medical care for infants who survive abortions.

**Boating Target Practice**

President Donald Trump lobbed another threat at Iran on Wednesday, vowing to destroy any Iranian gunboats that "harass" U.S. vessels.

"I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea," he tweeted.

For Trump, it was another threat in a feud that brought the two countries to the brink of war earlier this year. But for some of the president's critics, it was the idea of shooting down a boat that caught their attention. They quickly pointed out that boats float on the water rather than fly in the air.

"After this, we’ll sink their planes!" tweeted Princeton historian Kevin Kruse.

"Are we 'shooting down' the flying boats?" tweeted Frank Figliuzzi, a former FBI assistant director.

Others said Trump was trying to distract people from his administration's struggle to contain the coronavirus pandemic.

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Joe Lockhart, former press secretary to President Bill Clinton, said it would be illegal to fire at ships based on "mere harassment," and the threat "does show how desperate the @realDonaldTrump is to distract from the pandemic."

“I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea.”

Trump's threat to Iran – the latest in a series – came a week after the nation said it is stepping up patrols in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. Navy reported that 11 Iranian ships approached their vessels in a "harassing" manner.

Tensions between the United States and Iran have been particularly high since Trump pulled out of the Iranian nuclear agreement and spiked sanctions on Tehran's fragile economy. And, like the United States, Iran has been hit hard by the deadly coronavirus.

Trump and his aides have accused Iran-backed interests of attacking U.S. troops in neighboring Iraq and harassing American ships in the gulf.

In early January, Trump authorized a drone strike that killed a top Iranian general, leading to a retaliatory strike on U.S. troops. On April 1, Trump said Iran and groups backing it were planning a "sneak attack" on U.S. troops in Iraq, and he threatened that the Iranians would "pay a very heavy price" if they carried it out.

There have also been interludes of diplomacy, such as when Trump said he would help Iran fight the effects of the coronavirus if it asked. Then there are days like Wednesday, as social media lit up with critics and the idea of shooting down boats.

"Trump thinks the Iranians have flying boats that he can shoot down," tweeted the Palmer Report, an account that focuses on political analysis.

Trump supporters, meanwhile, focused on the president's pledge to "destroy" Iranian gunboats if necessary and praised the president for standing up to the threats emanating from Tehran.

"President Trump has changed the Navy's rules of engagement at sea, ordering @USNavy to destroy #Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships," said Twitter user Joe Chenelly. "Hopeful this deters further naval aggression by #Iran in international waters. Praying it doesn't lead to further escalation."

**The Federal Ward of States**

Allowing states to declare bankruptcy would end federalism and convert states into wards of the federal government, claimed John Baker, professor emeritus of law at Louisiana State University and Federalist Society [contributor](https://fedsoc.org/contributors/john-baker-1), offering his analysis on Friday’s edition of SiriusXM’s Breitbart News Daily with host Alex Marlow.

On Wednesday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) [expressed support](https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2020/04/22/mitch-mcconnell-floats-creating-bankruptcy-process-for-u-s-states/) for allowing states to use bankruptcy to discharge certain liabilities. “I would certainly be in favor of allowing states to use the bankruptcy route,” he said. “It saves some cities, and there’s no good reason for it not to be available.”

“[Mitch McConnell] is suggesting amending the bankruptcy code to allow states to go into bankruptcy court and go through a process the way that cities and other municipalities are able to do under a chapter of the bankruptcy code,” said Baker. “There are good reasons why states cannot do this and should not ever be able to do it.”

Baker continued, “States have residual sovereignty. Like the federal government, neither can be sued without their consent. That’s the nature of sovereignty. This proposal, if ever enacted, would finish off what’s left of federalism.”

**LISTEN**:

States should not be likened to cities in terms of bankruptcy, explained Baker.

“Cities are creatures of the state,” Baker noted. “They are controlled by the state. They have no sovereignty. If you put states in bankruptcy, basically they are wards of the federal government. Now, under the Spending Clause, they’re pretty close to that anyway, but this would finish it off, and they would become nothing more than districts of the federal government.”

States would become subjects of the federal government if allowed to declare bankruptcy, just as regional areas in France are “subordinates to the sovereign in Paris,” Baker added.

A “structural understanding” of the Constitution is absent among “most Americans, including most lawyers,” remarked Baker.

Baker continued, “They’ve never studied the Federalist Papers or anything else. So when somebody comes up with an idea that sounds like a quick fix and there is — they think — precedent about it — that is cities — they don’t go into a deep dive or [ask], ‘What does this mean?’, and it means controlling the states.”

“The choice is not simply bankruptcy or bailout,” Baker stated. “There are other choices. We have had states in the 19th century that defaulted on their obligations. The state of Mississippi, and other states, have not paid off debts from the 19th century, but 20 years ago, Mississippi was shocked when it went into the international market to borrow some money to find out that the London bondholders still had them on a blacklist, and they couldn’t borrow money in the international markets.”

Baker went on, ”California and Illinois need to be treated like the third-world countries that they are.”

“Third-world states” should be treated “like Argentina,” advised Baker. He reflected on Argentina’s 2001 defaulting on its sovereign debt as a guide for how to proceed with states seeking an escape from their liabilities.

Baker said, “[Argentina] could not get any more money, and so what it had to do was go into the international market and borrow and waive its sovereign immunity, which meant it could be sued. Argentina refused to pay the bondholders, and a very astute set of investors bought up those bonds at a very low amount, and then they sued Argentina. Argentina claimed sovereign immunity, but they had waived it. States do waive sovereign immunity for certain purposes.”

Baker went on, “We should make [states] waive their sovereign immunity — not us as a country — but put them in a position where in order to get funding they have to waive their immunity so that they become subject to suit — and not suit in California or Illinois courts — in a federal court in another state. That way the bondholders would impose a discipline that neither the politicians in the particular states, nor even in Congress, are willing to impose. That’s the problem.”

Baker concluded, “It’s what has been the case in the past. If you want money, you’re going to have to waive your sovereign immunity.”

**The Rebellion**

**The mainstream media and governments are losing control of people all over the globe.** Humans are finally standing up for their rights to live not as slaves, but as free sovereign people capable of making their own decisions without rulers and elitists calling the shots. That does not mean they can’t still reward you for proper indebtedness, and excoriate you for being debt free.



**Global tyranny has been tried many times, but we have not actually experience in on this scale. What kind of power can crush and silence an entire world in less than 21 days? President Trump was the leader of the century, but this greater power swept him aside with the bristles of the global media empire like so much dust off their shoes. The people of the world watched as America First was turned into America who? in a matter of weeks.**

**We were witnessing a mass uprising against governments and their propaganda outlets.**  The yellow vests or France, the Hong Kong youth, Venezuelans, Iranians, and even Californians were taking to the streets to fight the Global Syndicate and their Climate Change, Green New Deal, Carbon Tax, Agenda 2030 plan to enslave the world. More and more people got off their knees and stood up for their basic human right to live freely. Then, governments and the elitists smashed them like a swarm of gnats. But, we are not so easily dismissed. We are at that point where power will return to the people and the elitists will be the ones living in fear. All we have to do, is be free.

**The mainstream media is going to continue its smear campaign against anyone who dares to believe they have the right to live freely so long as they aren’t harming others and take life’s risk upon themselves.** But as fewer people tune in to listen to their propaganda, fewer people will be brainwashed by it. A lot of people have lost everything in the tyrannical liberty-crushing demands put upon them, and now that they have nothing to lose, they are finally realizing their rights don’t come from the government or elitists.

**America Free Radio is here, and no smear campaign by government lapdogs will stop people from waking up at this point.**The media has been enslaving our minds so the government won’t have to enslave our bodies.  But it’s out now and in broad daylight and people have had enough. **The veil has been lifted.**

People are realizing that we own ourselves. And we are finally standing together to let the “masters” know that we are not their slaves. The quote in the movie, a Bug’s Life can be applied today with a simple change of words.

***“It’s not about food. It’s about keeping those ants in line!”***

*We all know at this point,****“it’s not about health. It’s about keeping those people in line!”***

Take notice of the clips of this movie on YouTube.  The comments have been disabled, not by those posting the videos, but by YouTube.  It’s just another means to keep people “in line.”  **They censor us, they brainwash us, and they expect us to obey their commands stay as their slaves. But people have had enough!**

Mass civil disobedience, where people are going to cease to obey laws that control them is already happening. Governors who locked people in their homes and barked commands that some close their businesses will lose the power to dictate once enough people disobey, and that day is coming.  This horrific cycle of violence and slavery is ending and it’s panicking those who have had control of us for so long. You can read it in their headlines.

***“Fear the second wave.”***

***“Anti-government extremists.”***

***“We can’t get your hair cut or people will die.”***

Well, guess what? You don’t own us. And your fear-mongering is falling on deaf ears.

Bottom of Form

**Humanity is finally moving in the right direction.**The last step is to just live.  Protesting is begging the master to let you be free.  Just live free. Americas don’t ask permission. Occasionally, we ask for forgiveness. Conduct your life as the free, sovereign human being you were born as, and let the ruling class panic. If you don’t buy their fear, they cannot control you. The fact that humans are finally realizing they had this power all along is incredible.

Live your life your way! That’s the biggest middle finger we can give to any tyrant, whether it be a cop, a governor, a politician, an elitist, or anyone else who wants our compliance and enslavement. Freedom is not negotiable and rights are not gifts from governments or others.  We all have the basic human right to be free and live our life the way we see fit.  As more people realize this, our power grows and the mainstream media’s fear campaign fails. After all, if there are no order followers, there are no orders.

**It’s about time we all stand together and abolish the last shred of modern-day slavery!**I will not sit back and allow anyone to continue life as a slave if I can help it! I might not be able to do much, but I can promote peace, liberty, and the abolishment of all forms of slavery.

Some say the pen is mightier than the sword, maybe that’s true, maybe it’s not.  **But I am tired of being told I have to give up my rights to live free for a false sense of security.** I will no longer be owned or commanded. This is MY life and I am peacefully choosing to be free.

**Twitter Suspends Account of UV Light Company**

Twitter has suspended the account of a Colorado biotech company which is working with [Cedars-Sinai](https://apnews.com/b44f4531071e6204023f7b8e16f59d4b) to test and develop a potential coronavirus treatment **using UV light inserted into the lungs** - the same week as Homeland Security's head of Science and Technology, Bill Bryan, suggested that UV light could have a significant affect on viruses such as COVID-19.

The suspension of Aytu BioScience's account comes shortly after YouTube removed a video demonstrating the technology (which can be seen below on Vimeo). Aytu's "Healight" is a medical device which administers intermittent ultraviolet (UV-A) light inside a patient's trachea, which has the "potential to positively impact outcomes for critically ill patients infected with coronavirus and severe respiratory infections," according to a corporate press release.

The company is working with the Medically Associated Science and Technology (MAST) team at Cedars-Sinai medical center, and are seeking expedited FDA approval for near-term use of the technology.

Twitter and YouTube's ban of Aytu couldn't have anything to do with this, could it?

**Schools: The Last Frontier of Freedom**

Harvard Magazine published a truly awful article this past week in which Elizabeth Bartholet, a Harvard Law School professor and the director of its Child Advocacy Program, comes out strongly against homeschooling. Bartholet's interview is a smorgasbord of selective outrage and red herrings. She points to isolated instances of neglect by homeschooling parents (mentioning exactly one example) but conveniently ignores shocking evidence of widespread sexual abuse and physical violence in America's public schools (1.1 million serious incidents, according to a 2016 report originally published under then-President Barack Obama's administration).

Bartholet also ignores the reams of evidence demonstrating that homeschooled children do better academically, socially and professionally than their public-schooled peers.

The piece has received well-deserved criticism from press outlets including Forbes, The Christian Post, National Review and the Daily Mail. In the Washington Examiner this week, columnist Tim Carney ripped apart Bartholet's specious arguments and concluded by saying, "You need to worry about these people," and "These people have a dangerous agenda."

He's right. But I would go further. The attack on homeschooling must be seen as part of a larger effort to silence conservatives and marginalize their impact in this country.

If people like Elizabeth Bartholet are successful in criminalizing homeschooling, they won't stop there. They'll move on to people who send their children to public school and who nevertheless impart values with which she and her cadre of statists and secular humanists don't agree. The next step would be further interference with – and even termination of – parental rights.

This is not extreme, and it isn't hysteria.

There is plenty of precedent. Take abortion, for example. According to the Planned Parenthood website, which provides state-by-state information on abortion access, 12 states and the District of Columbia do not require that parents or any legal guardian be notified before a minor child can obtain an abortion.

Washington is among them. In 2010, a 15-year-old student at Ballard High School in Seattle was given an exit pass by school administrators, who procured a taxi for her to go to an abortion clinic and have an abortion without her parents' knowledge or consent. When the girl's mother found out, she was outraged. It's "always best if parents are involved in their children's health care, but they don't always have a say," King County Health Department representative said in a statement. "At any age in the state of Washington, an individual can consent to a termination of pregnancy."

Even in the other 38 states that require parental or guardian notification, the minor can obtain a "judicial bypass." In theory, anyone can take a minor child before a judge to obtain such a bypass, permitting the minor to obtain an abortion without parental knowledge, or over parents' objection.

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Such laws have been on the books for decades. But the attacks on parental rights in the transgender advocacy movement are much more recent, and even more insidious.

While advocates and activists argue strongly for preserving the parental rights of parents who are transgender, they are just as emphatically engaged in opposing the rights of parents whose children claim to be transgender.

Across the United States (and Canada and Europe), cases are being brought in which parental rights are sought out to be terminated because the parents do not "affirm" their minor child's assertion that he or she is a different gender than his or her biological sex. Refusal to do so is argued to be abuse. These arguments are making their way into divorce and child custody cases as well – the case of James Younger in Texas is an infamous example – with transgender activists claiming that the parent who opposes "social transitioning," the administration of "puberty blockers" or surgical mutilation should be denied custody, all in the name of the child's "rights."

Efforts to determine whether gender-dysphoric children are suffering from other medical, psychological or emotional issues – like depression, anxiety, Asperger's or other autism spectrum disorders – are de minimus or nonexistent. Many adults who have "detransitioned" from their earlier transgender identities are speaking out about this with anger and regret. Medical professionals themselves express concerns that too many children are being diagnosed, medicated and/or surgically altered. They express these concerns in secret, fearing that the inevitable accusations of being "transphobic" will destroy their career.

The same dynamic is playing out in the social sciences. Brown University assistant professor Dr. Lisa Littman published a peer-reviewed scholarly article about "rapid onset gender dysphoria" ("ROGD"), exploring the phenomenon of teens identifying as "trans" who had expressed no such gender identification issues earlier in their lives. Predictably, the mob descended with their cries of "transphobia." Brown University withdrew the article with an apology and then republished it without substantive changes.

The larger point is this: Disagreement will not be tolerated, and persuasion will not be permitted. Hardcore leftists will not be satisfied until those on the right – or anyone who pokes holes in the prevailing narrative, for that matter – are silenced, personally and politically.

They are trying to stop the spread of conservative viewpoints by inserting themselves into the relationship between parents and children in the name of "children's rights."

Efforts to silence conservatives in the political realm are a topic for another column. Suffice it to say that they include vote fraud (through tactics like ballot harvesting and the elimination of all photo ID requirements); calls to abolish the Electoral College and equal representation in the U.S. Senate (undermining the voices and votes of citizens in rural states); and packing the U.S. Supreme Court with activists, in case it becomes necessary to do by judicial fiat what the left cannot obtain through the legislative process.

This is a dangerous agenda indeed. And the time to fight it is now.

We’re all homeschoolers now. Schools have closed for more than 55 million students nationwide, and at least 34 states have shuttered schools for the rest of the academic year. Just in time, our media and academic elites are coming out swinging against homeschooling.

The Washington Post and ­Salon have raised questions about the practice lately. More alarming, Harvard Magazine this week unleashed a thoroughly [unfounded attack on homeschooling](https://nypost.com/2020/04/23/harvard-professor-wants-to-ban-authoritarian-homeschooling/), drawing on the work of Harvard University law professor Elizabeth Bartholet.

The article cited Bartholet’s call for “a presumptive ban,” because homeschooling supposedly “violates children’s right to a ‘meaningful education’ and their right to be protected from potential child abuse.”

Strangely enough, the article left out the fact that nearly two-thirds of US students aren’t proficient in reading, and that the most rigorous evidence shows that homeschool students tend to fare better academically and socially than do their peers in conventional schools.

The article also forgot to mention the 2004 report from the US Department of Education estimating that 1 in 10 students in government schools will experience school-employee sexual misconduct by the time they graduate from high school.

By Bartholet’s own logic, she should call for a presumptive ban on government schooling.

More fundamentally, Bartholet argues that the burden of proof should be on parents to get permission from the government to homeschool their own children. But this view is backward. Our children don’t ­belong to the government. As the US Supreme Court ruled in 1925, “the child is not the mere creature of the state.”

Bartholet also charges that parents have “essentially [authoritarian control over their children](https://nypost.com/2020/04/18/how-to-parent-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic-without-stress/)” and that “it’s always dangerous to put powerful people in charge of the powerless, and to give the powerful ones total ­authority.” This is beyond parody. Does she not realize that ­using government force to ban homeschooling is the definition of authoritarianism?

The article’s anti-conservative and anti-religious bias was palpable. It argued that many homeschooling families “are driven by conservative Christian beliefs” and that “some of these parents are ‘extreme religious ideologues.’  ”

This is fearmongering. I’m not a religious believer, but all Americans have a First Amendment right to freely exercise their religious beliefs, even if some academic elites don’t like it. At some point, moreover, secularism of the kind that animates Bartholet and the Harvard piece bleeds into a kind of dogma of its own.

Perhaps even more disturbing was the bizarre image that ­accompanied the article: that of a sad homeschooled child ­imprisoned in her home while other kids are free to play outside. That image, again, had it completely backward. Homeschoolers actually have more time to play outside, since they aren’t stuck in classrooms all day.

A 2019 study in the Peabody Journal of Education found that homeschool students are also more likely to participate in cultural and family activities than are similar students in government-run schools.

Incidentally, the house in the Harvard image was built out of four books. And just in case you didn’t pick up the anti-religious animus from the text, one of the books was the Bible.

#### SEE ALSO

### **[NYC home-schooling mom: 'It's hectic'](https://nypost.com/2020/04/22/how-five-new-york-families-are-coping-with-home-schooling/)**

More amusing still, another book was originally misspelled as “artithmatic,” though Harvard Magazine corrected the spelling error a few days later. Talk about an extraordinary self-own.

The article, it seems, is part of a broader Harvard campaign against homeschooling. Harvard Law School will be hosting an anti-homeschooling conference this June. According to its program, the conference’s “focus will be on problems of educational deprivation and child maltreatment” — suggesting that the framing and conclusions are predetermined.

I would love to attend for the sake of healthy viewpoint diversity. Alas, attendance is by invitation only.

There is plenty of room for ­debating the merits of homeschooling. But an all-out attack on the right of families to homeschool their own children, at a time when nearly all families [are homeschooling by necessity](https://nypost.com/2020/03/20/tip-for-suddenly-homeschooling-parents-during-coronavirus-aim-for-survival-not-perfection/), displays the level of un-self-awareness only elite liberal academe is truly capable of.

We need a genuine exchange of ideas based on the evidence rather than sensationalism and dark assumptions about religious families. And we should always discuss the merits of homeschooling relative to a realistic alternative — government schooling — rather than perfection.

**Popcorn for Fun**

The chief of the Revolutionary Guard terror group commander Salami threatened the US that Iran will destroy American warships in the Arabian Gulf.

“To the Americans, we announce that in defending our national security, maritime borders, interests at sea and the security of our ships and forces at sea, we are fully determined and serious,” commander Salami said.

[President Trump said on Wednesday he has instructed the US Navy “to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats”](https://btnews.online/archives/119716/president-trump-instructs-us-navy-to-destroy-all-iranian-gunboats-if-they-harass-us-ships/) if they harass American ships at sea.

“I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea”, President Trump tweeted.

Last week, nearly a dozen Iranian vessels belonging to Iran’s Revolutionary Guard terror group harassed a group of American ships in the international waters of the North Arabian Gulf. The US Fifth Fleet later published video footage of the encounter, which showed the gunboats circling a larger US ship.

**Bad Chinese**

There have been a number of disturbing reactions in the press when it comes to the coverage of the coronavirus outbreak. From the distortion of the administration's actions to the contradictions in the critiques to the focus on only negative outcomes, the media complex has been notably obnoxious. One of the other truly disturbing actions has been the coverage of China and its role in all of this global pandemic strife.

The press has ranged from excusing responsibility to spearheading the Chi-Com insistence that the term ‘’Wuhan virus’’ be deemed racist, in order to skirt blame for the outbreak’s origins. There has been light coverage of the efforts to restrict notification of other nations, scant reports on the harsh methods employed by the government on the Mainland to contain the virus, and barely notice made of the suspect outreach by China - from flawed healthcare equipment sold to tainted testing kits delivered to nations. Excusing the World Health Organization of culpability is another connected result.

Our press has been also speaking glowingly on how China supposedly has been successful in containing its virus problem. There has been little curiosity to look into this claim, showing a willingness to merely repeat the party line delivered by the ruling party, despite two glaring issues. This is the same ruling class that has practiced sophistry and misdirection with the initial outbreak, yet no questions are posed about the veracity of current reports from this same source. Additionally, if the Chinese are experiencing such a grand reaction in efforts to stem the outbreak, why are they not offering the rest of the world their successful techniques?

These are questions not to be posed by our journalist class. While many are dismayed at the fawning behavior of our media elites regarding a communist regime it starts to come into focus when a larger picture is drawn up. To show the motivations behind this journalistic curiosity it helps to look first at Hollywood.

There was a time generations back when the studios and power brokers in the entertainment industry took a militant stand against censorship. Suggest any alteration to the content of their productions and you would be charged with being a fascist who wants to suppress artistic expression, and possibly even wanting to burn books! No longer is this the case. That stance has dissipated.

Regularly studios alter their films these days to appease Chinese censors and satisfy the Chi-Com leadership. This is because the Chinese film market has exploded in the past decade, now exceeding North America with the amount of movie screens on the mainland. This is a lucrative market for studios, and it is one fully controlled by their government. They limit the amount of Hollywood-produced titles to be shown per year, and keep a tight clamp on the content they allow. To get into this marketplace studios will bow to the demands placed on them.

More than box office receipts are at play. Most studios these days are part of a larger conglomerate, and those corporate interests extend well into the Chinese market. Therefore a studio cannot anger the Chi-Com authority with controversial movie content, or they risk a broader restriction being placed on the interests of the parent company. Were Disney to make a film angering the Chinese it could see its [theme park](https://www.nasdaq.com/articles/comcast-bullish-china-theme-park-opening-beijing-2017-10-26) expansion become threatened, for example. If Sony pictures offends the communists cinematically it might experience reprisals by having its electronics goods limited in those markets.

Now look at the commercial makeup of the major news outlets. CNN is [part](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/09/business/dealbook/att-time-warner-cnn.html) of the newly expanded Time Warner-ATT merger. [NBC](https://www.google.com/url?q=http://money.cnn.com/2009/12/03/news/companies/comcast_nbc/index.htm&source=gmail&ust=1587747321221000&usg=AFQjCNEGgzoZhlt-DP3UZAoqEAb4bnNdiA), and by extension MSNBC and CNBC, are under the umbrella of the Comcast monolith. It becomes clear that taking a harshly critical eye towards China could imperil the interests of the parent companies. [ATT](https://www.corp.att.com/worldwide/att-you-china/) has communications efforts in play. Comcast also has telecom interests as well as a global reach with its television divisions. Both news networks could impact films released on the Mainland, respectively by Warner Brothers and Universal Pictures.

Even The New York Times is influenced. While technically an independent entity, the Paper of Record has a Chinese-language edition it publishes. It was about eight years ago when that edition published an investigation into the financials of the Chinese premier and promptly saw its access to the people of China [blocked by the government](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/26/world/asia/china-blocks-web-access-to-new-york-times.html).

It may feel off to some, trying to reconcile that news networks would actually be willing to mold their narratives based on the corporate needs in another country. Hollywood, again, illustrates what takes place. In 2009 MGM Studios produced the remake of the film “Red Dawn’’, with a modernized script that changed the invading army of the United States from Russia to Chinese troops, ostensibly intending to collect on all of the debt owed to the nation.

MGM, as a financially struggling outfit, does not have its own film distribution network and as a result had to rely on other companies to place the film into theaters. Trouble was found when no other company would agree to distribute [“Red Dawn’’](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/la-et-china-red-dawn-20110316-story.html), because they all were sure the Chi-Com authorities would become angered by the content and feared economic reprisals would follow. Despite the fact that they had no role in the production merely being connected to the film tangentially was too big of a risk. MGM ended up going to the ridiculous extent of taking its completed film and digitally altering the imagery so that the U.S. was laughably invaded by North Korea.

Today we are seeing it play out on our shores. The corporate media complex has to follow the directives of the Chi-Com authorities, or significant economic punishment could be realized by the parent companies. Now roll in their already rooted antagonism for President Trump and the bizarre narratives we have been fed begin to make much more sense.

**In Like Flynn**

A prosecutor reviewing the case against former Trump adviser Lt. Gen. [Michael Flynn](https://www.theepochtimes.com/t-michael-flynn) uncovered “stunning … evidence that proves Mr. Flynn’s allegations of having been deliberately set up and framed by corrupt agents at the top of the FBI,” Flynn’s lawyer, [Sidney Powell](https://www.theepochtimes.com/t-sidney-powell), said in an April 24 court filing.

The evidence was filed with the court and a redacted copy was provided to the defense on April 24 under a protective order and is thus inaccessible to the public. Within hours, Powell [submitted a filing](https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6877107-181.html) requesting the court to unseal the documents and order the government to give them to Flynn unredacted.

Powell also submitted two emails which indicate prosecutors made an under-the-table deal with Flynn’s previous lawyers to not prosecute his son in exchange for Flynn’s cooperation with multiple investigations.

Flynn, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency and former national security adviser to President Donald Trump, pleaded guilty on Dec. 1, 2017, to one count of lying to FBI agents.

Jeffrey Jensen, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri, has been reviewing the Flynn case at the direction of Attorney General William Barr since January.

The review “has involved the analysis of reports related to the investigation along with communications and notes by Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) personnel associated with the investigation,” said Timothy Shea, U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, in an April 24 email ([pdf](https://www.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.191592/gov.uscourts.dcd.191592.180.1.pdf)) to the defense filed with the court.

The new documents “were obtained and analyzed by” Jensen in March and April, Shea said. “Additional documents may be forthcoming.”

## ‘In Their Own Handwriting’

The new evidence “defeats any argument that the [FBI] interview of Mr. Flynn on January 24, 2017 was material to any ‘investigation,’” Powell wrote. “The government has deliberately suppressed this evidence from the inception of this prosecution—knowing there was no crime by Mr. Flynn.”

The documents “show in their own handwriting and emails” that “partisan” FBI and Justice Department (DOJ) leaders “intended either to create an offense they could prosecute or at least get [Flynn] fired,” Powell said.

Reiterating Flynn’s demand for the case to be dismissed, she said “the government’s misconduct in this case is beyond shocking and reprehensible.”

Powell has argued that the investigation of Flynn, officially for his supposed “relationship” with Russia, was a pretext to target Trump.

Trump said in a March 15 tweet he was [“strongly considering” a pardon for Flynn](https://www.theepochtimes.com/trump-strongly-considering-pardon-for-former-adviser-gen-flynn_3273255.html).

## Missing Documents, Plea Withdrawal Request

Powell previously asked Judge Emmet Sullivan to [order the government to hand over a plethora of documents](https://www.theepochtimes.com/flynns-legal-offensive-pushes-spygate-disclosure_3078691.html) Powell said were exculpatory to Flynn. Among them, the [original draft of the FBI report](https://www.theepochtimes.com/flynns-lawyer-fbi-agents-wrote-flynn-didnt-lie-we-have-eyewitness_3210186.html) from the Flynn interview.

[She said the case should be dismissed](https://www.theepochtimes.com/flynns-lawyer-to-prosecutors-give-us-exculpatory-information-then-well-move-to-have-case-dismissed_3137170.html) for [government misconduct](https://www.theepochtimes.com/flynn-expects-to-ask-judge-to-dismiss-case-against-him-his-lawyer-says_3130287.html), including for withholding the documents. [Sullivan denied the request](https://www.theepochtimes.com/judge-denies-flynns-requests-for-exculpatory-information-case-dismissal_3176162.html) in December, but new information has been gradually turning up in the case.

On Jan. 7, prosecutors asked for zero to six months in prison for Flynn, a somewhat harsher recommendation than what Flynn expected based on the cooperation he provided. The prosecutors argued he pulled back his cooperation in a related case against his former business partner Bijan Rafiekian last year.

Flynn asked the court on Jan. 14 ([pdf](https://www.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.191592/gov.uscourts.dcd.191592.151.0_1.pdf)) to allow him to withdraw his original plea, saying the prosecutors violated the terms of the agreement.

## Unofficial Side Deal

The emails newly revealed by Powell date back to 2018 and seem to show internal communications regarding the plea deal between Flynn’s previous lawyers from Covington & Burling.

“We have a lawyers’ [sic] unofficial understanding that they are unlikely to charge [Flynn] Junior in light of the Cooperation Agreement,” says [one heavily redacted email](https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6877108-181-1.html) sent on March 19, 2018.

The prosecutors threatened to charge Flynn Jr. based on allegations that Flynn’s now-defunct consultancy, Flynn Intel Group, lied in its foreign lobbying disclosures.

The [second heavily redacted email](https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6877109-181-2.html), dated March 27, 2018, suggests the prosecutors tried to keep the deal regarding Flynn’s son unofficial to make future prosecutions easier.

“The government took pains not to give a promise to MTF [Michael T. Flynn] regarding Michael [Flynn] Jr., so as to limit how much of a ‘benefit’ it would have to disclose as part of its Giglio disclosures to any defendant against whom MTF may one day testify,” the email said.

“Giglio” refers to a 1972 Supreme Court opinion that requires prosecutors to disclose to the defense that a witness used by the prosecutors has been promised an escape from prosecution in exchange for cooperation.

An analysis by The Epoch Times pointed out more than nine months ago [that such a side deal may have existed](https://www.theepochtimes.com/did-flynn-just-call-out-mueller-on-under-the-table-plea-deal_3001928.html).

Former FBI agent and Epoch Times contributor Marc Ruskin called such a deal “unethical” [in a prior interview](https://www.theepochtimes.com/flynns-lawyers-mueller-team-wanted-false-testimony-possibly-retaliated-when-rebuked_2997097.html).

“To twist the father’s arm with regard to his child is a pretty low thing to do, but we’ve seen low things done in these cases,” said.

## Going Against Ex-Lawyers

Powell has asserted that Flynn is innocent in the lobbying matter and if there was anything wrong with the paperwork, it was the fault of Covington, which Flynn originally hired to prepare it.

Rafiekian was charged and convicted in a case related to the disclosures, but the case was [tossed by the judge for a lack of evidence](https://www.theepochtimes.com/flynns-former-partner-acquitted-of-illegal-foreign-lobbying_3093817.html).

The question of who bungled up the paperwork created a conflict of interest between Flynn and Covington which resulted in the lawyers’ providing ineffective counsel, Powell has argued.

The prosecutors [negotiated a deal with Flynn](https://twitter.com/PetrSvab/status/1235984139519737856) where he’s partially given up his attorney-client privilege so that Covington and the government could effectively push back against that allegation.

Covington lawyers have since submitted declarations of more than 100 pages of text and more than 500 pages of partly-redacted exhibits related to their representation of Flynn.

The government has been [asking the judge for more time](https://twitter.com/PetrSvab/status/1241117921222561792) to absorb new claims and information and also in light of the CCP virus epidemic.

In an April 24 status report ([pdf](https://www.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.191592/gov.uscourts.dcd.191592.179.0_3.pdf)), prosecutors asked Sullivan to give them until May 8 to file another report and propose a briefing schedule “if feasible.”

**Cause of Death**

I received a call from my son yesterday. He rides motorcycles with a club. One of the club members’ father was killed a few weeks ago on his motorcycle. He just received the certificate of cause of death from the State of North Carolina. It listed COVID-19 as the cause of death. Besides being obviously incorrect, for some reason, the cause of death does not allow the family to sue the driver who hit the motorcyclist for civil damages.

There is more.

[Pennsylvania](https://www.foxnews.com/category/us/us-regions/northeast/pennsylvania) has corrected its [coronavirus](https://www.foxnews.com/category/health/infectious-disease/coronavirus) data multiple times over the past week to account for irregularities, according to new reports.

Earlier this week, Pennsylvania started to include “probable deaths” in its fatalities. As a result, the total number of coronavirus deaths grew by 276, then 360, in successive nights, almost doubling the number of deaths in the state in two days. [The Pennsylvania Department of Health](https://www.health.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx) (DOH) subsequently removed 200 deaths from its count after facing mounting questions about the accuracy of the count.

Health Secretary Rachel Levine [spoke to the Philadelphia Inquirer](https://www.inquirer.com/health/coronavirus/spl/pennsylvania-death-count-changes-confusion-coroanvirus-20200423.html) about the initial decision to include probable deaths, as well as the decision to later remove those from the count. A “probable death” is one that a doctor believes is caused by COVID-19, even though the patient is never tested for the virus.

“We realize that this category can be confusing, since it does change over time,” Levine said.

“At times, there are things we need to review, and potentially revisit the way the data is being analyzed,” she said. “And this is one of those times.”

Levine clarified that both spikes in numbers due to “probable deaths” included deaths that occurred days, even weeks earlier. The discrepancy initially came to light weeks ago when [coroners reported that their numbers did not match what the DOH reported](https://www.inquirer.com/news/pennsylvania/spl/pennsylvania-coronavirus-coroners-testing-communication-health-department-20200410.html).

“There’s a discrepancy in the numbers,” Charles E. Kiessling Jr., president of the Pennsylvania Coroners Association and coroner in Lycoming County, told the Inquirer. “I’m not saying there’s something going on... I’m not a conspiracy theory guy. But accuracy is important.”

“This is why I’m so upset,” Kiessling added. “Our job is to investigate... We do this every day.”

Kiessling said it was a matter of public safety that the DOH clarify the discrepancy. Coroners have complained over the past month regarding discrepancies in the death figures. The DOH initially claimed that [a computer glitch caused an issue](https://www.weny.com/story/42038259/several-pa-coroners-cite-discrepancies-state-reporting-of-covid-19-deaths) with reconciling multiple reporting systems and the “culmination of that data-validating effort.”

“We will now be reporting probable deaths related to COVID-19 in addition to confirmed deaths,” Levine announced Tuesday, but department spokesperson Nate Wardle told the Inquirer that “probable deaths” had been included in the count far earlier than that.

He later retracted his statement, saying the department only started to include “probable deaths” starting Tuesday, when Levine made the announcement. As of early Thursday, Kiessling said the DOH had not yet reached out to his office about the matter. Levine later said she would contact coroners next week, giving the department time to understand “the different nuances” of the issue.

State and United States officials expect coronavirus deaths to rise sharply in coming weeks, but what counts as a COVID-19-related fatality is a new source of controversy.

MPR News reported last week on a change in the way the disease appears on death certificates, regardless of whether someone was confirmed to have it. That shift has received praise from some quarters, but also spawned backlash and suggestions of ulterior motives.

As of Tuesday’s update from the Minnesota Department of Health, the deaths of 34 people are tied to COVID-19. That’s up from 12 the week before.

It’s unlikely there will ever be a precise count of this disease’s toll.

Last week, the National Vital Statistics System, which is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, provided new guidance for those who submit death certificates. It said they should list coronavirus if it was assumed to cause or contribute to a death. Clinicians say COVID-19 can hasten death of someone with a chronic respiratory condition because in severe cases it deprives the body of oxygen.

COVID-19 danger People with compromised immune systems are at risk

Ideally, people would have been tested before they died or after. But restrictions on tests and other considerations are preventing that in some cases.

Now, if someone died from pneumonia, respiratory distress or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and had exhibited coronavirus symptoms, their certificate will list COVID-19 as a presumed contributing factor, what’s known as comorbidity.

Minnesota follows the lead of that federal agency and advised the state’s medical community of the change in practice on Friday. While some people and public health experts say it will provide a fuller picture of how lethal the disease is, others call it irresponsible and contend it will artificially inflate numbers.

In some corners of the internet, conspiracy theories abound. The change is being cast as a politically motivated effort to scare the public and smear President Trump by making the situation look worse than it is. One ardent backer of the president, with more than 2 million Twitter followers, urged Trump to demand an audit on every death certificate that lists COVID-19.

Others say it gives an incentive to state, local and medical officials to pump up counts to unlock more federal money, given the all-hands-on deck effort to prioritize coronavirus cases.

MondayOn coronavirus, Trump walks a tightrope between grim warnings and offering hope

Republican state Sen. Jim Abeler, a prominent lawmaker on health matters in the Legislature, tweeted out his concern Monday. Abeler isn’t pushing the theories about political or financial motives. But he said there should be precision when assigning a cause of death.

“I don’t think the death certificate is a ‘maybe’ document. There shouldn’t be assumptions on there,” Abeler said in a phone interview Tuesday. “It should be the best available information. It should be with the highest degree of certainty. The minute we put assumptions and maybes on the death certificate, we now have a certificate that is meaningless and it’s an opinion document.”

Abeler and others who share his view also say there needs to be a clear distinction between dying from coronavirus and dying with it.

Doctors, nursing homes, funeral directors and other established certifiers who supply information for death certificates routinely offer assessments of the cause of death. Autopsies aren’t conducted for every person who dies. They’re usually done in cases of homicide or other suspicious deaths.

The head of the federal office that sent out the new guidelines says an increased number of pneumonia deaths is an indicator of COVID-19’s impact. Restrictions on testing means that many people aren’t being officially diagnosed with the illness even as they’re being told they probably have it.

Kumi Smith, an infectious disease epidemiologist at the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health, said there is a reason to believe that some deaths will slip below the radar.

“I think we’re concerned that COVID-19 deaths will be undercounted. But the biggest concern for us as epidemiologists is — by how much and how uniform is that undercounting?” Smith said. “Every single place is trying to course correct in different ways.”

Molly Mulcahy Crawford, the state registrar in Minnesota’s Office of Vital Records, said it’s possible some prior deaths will be reviewed if they involved coronavirus-like causes.

“Could these have been COVID-19? We’re going to see a lot of that analyzing the data we have available, maybe going back to the medical chart to see if there is any additional information that wasn’t used in the death certification,” she said.

The national vital statistics center has assigned a separate code to presumed COVID-19 cases, which would allow for some sorting later on. Smith said getting a better read is important because mortality rates can influence public health strategies for dealing with the present crisis and stopping future problems.

“If we start to have a better sense of how much of this virus is actually in the community, that is much better for informing our prevention efforts, for evaluating our prevention efforts,” Smith said. “That type of precision is really important. However, we’re still at a stage where the lack of precision is such a problem that back-calculating from deaths is really not recommended.”

Officials at the state Health Department said there are multiple reasons why post-mortem tests or exams are not being done for every suspected case.

Doing that would consume a test at a time when the supply is tight. It will also require greater use of personal protective equipment, which is strained as well. They also say it could further expose medical workers to infection.

I have news for you. Wearing a plaid tie with a striped suit is a nuance. Being caught in the hot tub with Menudo is a felony. Someone had better go to jail. Remember, when you consider a full scale rebellion, that war is simply justice denied.

**Medical Ethicist: Over 75?**

In October 2014, Ezekiel Emanuel published an essay in the Atlantic called “[Why I Hope to Die at 75.](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/10/why-i-hope-to-die-at-75/379329/)” Because Emanuel is a medical doctor and chair of the University of Pennsylvania’s department of medical ethics and health policy, as well as a chief architect of Obamacare, the article stirred enormous controversy.

Emanuel vowed to refuse not only heroic medical interventions once he turned 75, but also antibiotics and vaccinations. His argument: older Americans live too long in a diminished state, raising the question of, as he put it, “whether our consumption is worth our contribution.”

Emanuel was born into a combative clan. One brother, Rahm, recently completed two terms as the controversial mayor of Chicago; another brother, Ari, is a high-profile Hollywood agent. But even given his DNA, Emanuel’s death wish was a provocative argument from a medical ethicist and health-care expert.

Emanuel, now 62, talked with me about the social implications of longevity research and why he isn’t a fan of extending life spans. I was particularly curious to get his reaction to several promising new anti-aging drugs.

#### Q: It’s five years since you published the essay. Any second thoughts as you near the deadline?

A: Not really! [Laughing]

#### Q: You announced that you wouldn’t take any measures to prolong your life after 75. Isn’t that an extreme position?

A: First of all, it’s not an extreme position. I’m not going to die at 75. I’m not committing suicide. I’m not asking for euthanasia. I’m going to stop taking medications with the sole justification that the medication or intervention is to prolong my life.

#### Q. But it’s called “Why I hope to die …”

**"The world will exist fine if you happen to die. Great people, maybe even people greater than you, like Newton and Shakespeare and Euler—they died."**

A. As you probably know better than everyone else, it’s editors that choose titles and not authors.

I often get, from the people who want to dismiss me, “You know, my Aunt Nellie, she was clear as a bell at 94, and blah-blah-blah …” But as I said in the article, there are outliers. There are not that many people who continue to be active and engaged and actually creative past 75. It’s a very small number.

#### Q: You suggest that one effect of our obsession with longevity is that it diverts attention from the health and well-being of children.

A: Lots of presidents and lots of politicians say, “Children are our most valuable resource.” But we as a country don’t behave like that. We don’t invest in children the way we invest in adults, especially older adults. One of the statistics I like to point out is if you look at the federal budget, $7 goes to people over 65 for every dollar for people under 18.

#### Q: The buzzword in longevity research is “health span”—living a maximum life with a minimal amount of disability or ill health. Isn’t that a worthwhile goal?

A: If you ask anyone, “All right, design out the life you want,” I think people initially say, “Oh, I want to keep going as fast as I can, and then just fall off a cliff.” And then they reconsider: “Well, maybe I don’t want to die of a heart attack or a stroke in the middle of the night. I want to say goodbye to my family. So I want some gentle decline, but a very short amount of time. You know, months, not years.”

It makes perfect sense. I’m no different. I would like to maintain my vigor, my intellectual capacity, my productivity, all the way through to the end. But I think we also need to be realistic—that’s not the way most of us are going to live.

#### Q: Does that mean you’re skeptical about the health-span idea?

A: In the early 1980s, we had a theory that as we live longer, we’re going to stay in better health. You know, at 70, we’re going to be like our parents were when they were 50. Well, if you look at the data, maybe not. We’re having more disabilities. We have people with more problems. And even more important, for most people, is the biological decline in cognitive function. If you look at really smart people, there aren’t that many writing brand-new books after 75, and really developing new areas where they are leading thinkers. They tend to be re-tilling familiar areas that they’ve worked on for a long time.

#### Q: What’s wrong with simply enjoying an extended life?

A: These people who live a vigorous life to 70, 80, 90 years of age—when I look at what those people “do,” almost all of it is what I classify as play. It’s not meaningful work. They’re riding motorcycles; they’re hiking. Which can all have value—don’t get me wrong. But if it’s the main thing in your life? Ummm, that’s not probably a meaningful life.

#### Q: Are the anti-aging drugs in development just a bid for immortality by the back door?

A: Certainly. You listen to these people and their lingo is not “We’re just trying to get rid of problems.” Right? It’s “We want to live longer.” I notice that almost all of these things—not all of them, but many of them—are based out in California, because God forbid the world should continue to exist and I’m not part of it!

The world will exist fine if you happen to die. Great people, maybe even people greater than you, like Newton and Shakespeare and Euler—they died. And guess what? The world’s still there.

#### Q: What message do you think it sends when iconic innovators in Silicon Valley—people like Peter Thiel and Larry Ellison—are clearly fascinated by life extension and …

A: No, no—they’re fascinated by their life extension! This idea that they’re fascinated with life extension [in general]? Naw, they’re fascinated by their life extension. They find it hard to even contemplate the idea that they are going to die and the world is going to be fine without them.

#### Q: You have described the “American immortal”—people interested in life extension and immortality.

A: There is this view that longevity, living forever—and if not forever, 250 or 1,000 years—is really what we ought to be aiming at. And once you’ve got cultural leaders, or opinion leaders, saying this, people glom onto it. And it feeds into a whole situation of “Yes, dying is a bad thing.”

I do fear death. But I think I fear being sort of decrepit and falling apart more.

#### Q: Is it really a problem if one of these drugs like metformin shows a modest life-extending effect?

A: I think it would be, especially if what ends up happening is it adds a few years of life. Then the question is: What are the downsides of that? There may be a cognitive downside, maybe a little more mental confusion.

It’s very funny—every time I talk to people, it’s like, “Oh, yeah, definitely quality of life over quantity of life.” But when push comes to shove, it’s really quantity of life. “I might be a little more confused, but I’ll take that extra year!”

**Zombies in Space**

There are more than 2,000 active satellites orbiting Earth. At the end of their useful lives, many will simply burn up as they reenter the atmosphere. But some will continue circling as "zombie" satellites — neither alive nor quite dead.

"Most zombie satellites are satellites that are no longer under human control, or have failed to some degree," says Scott Tilley.

Tilley, an amateur radio operator living in Canada, has a passion for hunting them down. In 2018, he found a signal from a NASA probe called IMAGE that the space agency had lost track of in 2005. With Tilley's help, NASA was able to reestablish contact. But he has tracked down zombies even older than IMAGE.

"The oldest one I've seen is Transit 5B-5. And it launched in 1965," he says, referring to a nuclear-powered U.S. Navy navigation satellite that still circles the Earth in a polar orbit, long forgotten by all but a few amateurs interested in hearing it "sing" as it passes overhead.

Recently, Tilley got interested in a communications satellite he thought might still be alive — or at least among the living dead. LES-5, built by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Laboratory, was launched in 1967. Tilley was inspired by another amateur who in 2016 had found LES-1, an earlier satellite built by the same lab. What was intriguing to him about LES-5 was that if it was still working, it might be the oldest functioning satellite still in geostationary orbit.

By scouring the Internet, he found a paper describing the radio frequency that LES-5, an experimental military UHF communications satellite, should be operating on — if it was still alive. So he decided to have a look.

"This required the building of an antenna, erecting a new structure to support it. Pre-amps, filters, stuff that takes time to gather and put all together," he says. "When you have a family and a busy business, you don't really have a lot of time for that," he says. “But then came the COVID-19 pandemic. This is definitely the oldest emitting GEOsat I know of.”

British Columbia, where Tilley lives, was on lockdown. Like many of us, suddenly Tilley had time on his hands. He used it to look for LES-5, and on March 24, he hit the ham radio equivalent of pay dirt. He's been making additional measurements ever since.

"The reason this one is kind of intriguing is its telemetry beacon is still operating," Tilley says.

In other words, says Tilley, even though the satellite was supposed to shut down in 1972, it's still going. As long as the solar panels are in the sun, the satellite's radio continues to operate. Tilley thinks it may even be possible to send commands to the satellite. The MIT lab that built LES-5 still does a lot of work on classified projects for the military. NPR contacted its news office to ask if someone could say more about LES-5 and whether it really could still receive commands.

But after repeated requests, Lincoln Laboratory finally answered with a "no comment."

It seems that even a 50-year-old zombie satellite might still have secrets.

**Atlas Crumbles**

Skywatchers had high hopes that a [comet called ATLAS](https://www.space.com/bright-comet-atlas-visibility-april-2020.html) would light up the night sky this spring, with forecasts suggesting it could become bright enough to see with the unaided eye.

Instead, the icy object crumbled to pieces — but it's still putting on a spectacular show for scientists. Ye Quanzhi, an astronomer at the University of Maryland, snagged some time with [NASA's Hubble Space Telescope](https://www.space.com/15892-hubble-space-telescope.html) to take a look at Comet ATLAS on Monday (April 20) and caught a stunning image of its fragments that he [shared on Twitter](https://twitter.com/Yeqzids/status/1252256328841523200) as a preview of his research.

"We have been following the break-up of ATLAS since it was first detected in early April, but with ground-based telescopes we couldn't resolve most of the debris field," Ye told Space.com in an email, adding that he was excited to see the new images. "With Hubble, we are finally able to resolve individual mini-comets."

Ye hopes those mini-comets will help scientists understand what [caused ATLAS to fall apart](https://www.space.com/comet-atlas-falling-apart-photos.html). In particular, astronomers rely on the distance between fragments to reconstruct events, since that distance increases as more time passes since a specific fracture.

Previous observations had identified four main fragments from [Comet ATLAS](https://www.space.com/comet-atlas-may-be-brightenting.html). In the Hubble image, Ye said, he believes two of those fragments have broken down even more, yielding the two pairs of bright spots on the right, which represent the four largest fragments at the time.

The two clouds of brightness on the left may represent where older fragments have broken up into smaller pieces. Before beginning the observations, which lasted for one of Hubble's orbits around Earth, Ye had hoped that Hubble would be able to spot more mini-comets in those regions, but it would appear those fragments had already disintegrated too far by the time the observations began.

Comet ATLAS is hardly the first icy space rock to break up within scientists' view, but there are a few special conditions that make these new observations particularly exciting, Ye said. First, ATLAS happened to break up when it was quite close to Earth and quite bright, giving astronomers an [especially clear view](https://www.space.com/comet-swan-arrives-as-comet-atlas-crumbles.html).

And ATLAS hails from the [Oort Cloud](https://www.space.com/16401-oort-cloud-the-outer-solar-system-s-icy-shell.html), a distant sphere of icy rubble enveloping the solar system as much as 9.3 trillion miles (15 trillion kilometers) away from Earth. That vast distance makes it quite difficult for astronomers to study the Oort Cloud directly, but watching Comet ATLAS's antics will help scientists develop new hypotheses about what's happening out there.

ATLAS is only the second bright Oort cloud comet whose fragments Hubble has been able to observe in its 30 years of work, Ye said.

**Asteroid Flyby**



We've now got a good visual on the big space rock that's going to fly by Earth next week.

On Saturday (April 18), the [Arecibo Observatory](https://www.space.com/20984-arecibo-observatory.html) in Puerto Rico captured a radar image of the [asteroid 1998 OR2](https://www.space.com/huge-asteroid-1998-or2-telescope-photos-april-2020-flyby.html), which will zoom within 3.9 million miles (6.3 million kilometers) of our planet on April 29.

For perspective: The moon orbits Earth at an average distance of about 239,000 miles (385,000 km). So we have nothing to fear from [asteroid 1998 OR2's Earth flyby on April 29](https://www.space.com/asteroid-1998-or2-earth-flyby-april-2020.html), scientists stress.

Arecibo team members have been wearing masks in the workplace to help minimize the spread of the [novel coronavirus](https://www.space.com/topics/coronavirus), and they apparently see a bit of themselves in the approaching space rock.

"#TeamRadar and the @NAICobservatory staff are taking the proper safety measures as we continue observations. This week we have been observing near-Earth asteroid 1998 OR2, which looks like it's wearing a mask! It's at least 1.5 km across and is passing 16 lunar distances away!" team members [tweeted on Saturday](https://twitter.com/AreciboRadar/status/1251638650682650630) via the @AreciboRadar account.

The Arecibo researchers aren't the only ones keeping an eye on 1998 OR2. For example, Italian astrophysicist Gianluca Masi, who runs the online Virtual Telescope Project, has been tracking the [asteroid](https://www.space.com/51-asteroids-formation-discovery-and-exploration.html) as well.

And Masi will continue to do so. On April 28, in fact, he will host a [live webcast about 1998 OR2](https://www.virtualtelescope.eu/webtv/) that will feature telescope views of the object.

stronomers estimate that 1998 OR2 is between 1.1 and 2.5 miles (1.8 to 4.1 kilometers) wide — big enough that an impact could threaten human civilization. But, to repeat, there is nothing to fear here; the asteroid will miss us by a large margin on April 29.

Indeed, you should quell any general death-from-above fears that may be running rampant in your head. NASA has found and tracked the vast majority of giant near-Earth asteroids, and none of them pose a threat to Earth for the foreseeable future.



The pace of finding threatening near-Earth objects is slowing, so the planetary defense community is looking forward to a new space telescope to help in its quest to locate 90% of all city-threatening [asteroids](https://www.space.com/51-asteroids-formation-discovery-and-exploration.html).

In a late September presentation to NASA's planetary science advisory committee, [Planetary Defense](https://www.space.com/asteroid-threat-planetary-defense-nasa-chief.html) Officer Lindley Johnson said that the community has found about 35% of the predicted population of asteroids that are considered near-Earth objects (NEOs) and are roughly 450 feet (140 meters) in diameter or larger. The known head count stood at 8,788 such worlds in late September, he said, and scientists are "struggling" to discover 500 new such rocks a year.

To help with searching, the community is backing a proposal called the Near-Earth Object Surveillance Mission (NEOSM). That mission is adapted from a previous mission concept called the Near-Earth Object Camera ([NEOCam](https://www.space.com/35322-nasa-asteroid-space-telescope-b412-foundation-astronomy.html)), which went through several rounds of proposals for launch with no success. Most recently, NEOCam was a finalist for the smaller Discovery-class planetary science mission in 2015; it received some funding, but was not selected for launch.

In September, Thomas Zurbuchen, NASA's associate administrator for science, announced that the [development of NEOSM will go forward](https://www.space.com/nasa-to-build-near-earth-asteroid-hunter-telescope.html) under the leadership of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. It is expected to launch no earlier than 2025, pending funding availability from the agency's planetary defense program. Within a decade of its launch, Zurbuchen said, the agency should finally meet the congressional goal — but that will be at least 15 years after missing the 2020 deadline.

NASA and a large network of partner telescopes and international agencies all work together to search for potentially threatening worlds to Earth. (No imminent threats have yet been identified.) Part of their mandate comes from Congress, which in 2005 directed NASA to find at least 90% of potentially hazardous near-Earth objects of 450 feet or larger [by the end of 2020](https://www.space.com/40239-near-earth-asteroid-detection-space-telescope.html). In recent years, NASA has said that funding issues mean it will not meet that deadline.

The peak discovery rate for NEOs of this size, Johnson told the committee, was in 2016, with 564 objects found. "Our discovery rate since then has been tailing that; some of this is due to bad weather and some equipment problems in some of the major surveys," he said. This year's discoveries, as of late September, stood at about 360, and Johnson said they will "struggle" to reach 500 by Dec. 31.

He added that things are not all bad, as the Pan-STARRS 2 telescope is now operational in Hawaii (adding to its partner, Pan-STARRS 1) and the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST) is expected to begin observing the sky in 2020. LSST in particular will be a significant contributor to asteroid discoveries, but Johnson said that the community needs a dedicated space mission to seek out [potential hazards](https://www.space.com/killer-asteroids-warning-bill-nye.html) more quickly.