October 1, 2025
Last Update: September 21, 2026

Flags On Maclay

"A Light in an Unfamiliar World"



The quote above is from neighbors whom I've never met, who sent me a thank you card for the display of the *Flags on Maclay.* I was most gratified. In these days when our country is so divided, and some fear that America is in the midst of a moral and economic

decline, it may be time to look back at our heritage and think about what is truly at risk.

Of course, we all see America's past in a different "light," but there is much that is shared. It's my hope that the collection of flags may serve as a reminder of the values, aspirations, and institutions that evince the better angels of Americanism.

The flags on display reflect many of my concerns that are both professional and personal. Professionally, I have spent a lifetime as a kind of everyday foot soldier—in the trenches, so to speak—as an educator and professional economist. Personally, I have lived through:

1. The Cuban Missile Crisis
2. The Assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, and Malclolm X
3. The Vietnam War
4. The Struggle for Civil Rights in the 1960s
5. Apollo 11 and the Moon Landing
6. The Women's Movements for Equality and Reproductive Rights
7. Watergate
8. The Environmental Movement
9. The Iranian Revolution

10. The Challenger Space Shuttle Disaster
11. The Fall of the Berlin Wall
12. The Advent of the Personal Computer, the Internet, Mobile Phones, & Social Media
13. The 9/11 Attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon
14. The Election of a Black President
15. America's Longest War in Iraq and Afghanistan
16. The Russian Invasion of Ukraine
17. The January 6th Insurrection in the Nation's Capital
18. The Ongoing Resurrection of the Imperial Presidency

With America now midway through its third century, we might well ask: What will the next generation's list be like?

LISTING OF ENTRIES

Professional Concerns

Academic Freedom

Harvard University 7

ADDENDUM: February 6, 2026

The Threats Continue: And Continue to Fail 9

Federal Reserve Independence

The Federal Reserve. 10

ADDENDUM: December 12, 2025

The Federal Open Market Committee 13

Basic Research

National Academy of Sciences & NASA 14

ADDENDUM: February 1, 2026

De-DOGE-ing the Federal Science Budget 16

ADDENDUM: December 18, 2025

National Center for Atmospheric Research 17

Personal Concerns

The Sovereignty of Democratic Nations 20

Canada 20

ADDENDUM: January 25, 2026

The latest threat after Davos 21

Panama 22

Ukrane 22

Greenland 23

ADDENDUM: December 22, 2025

Greenland and the Monroe Doctrine 23

Brazil 24

ADDENDUM: January 9, 2026

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) 25

ADDENDUM: February 4, 2026

The United Nations: Will It Survive? 28

ADDENDUM: March 8, 2026

Lebanon: Casualty of Another Mideast War 31

ADDENDUM: April 8, 2026

3 Mysterious American Flags 32

ADDENDUM: April 13, 2026

The Welcome Defeat of Hungary's Victor Orban 34

Protecting the Crown Jewels of America

The Smithsonian Institution 36

National Park Service 37

ADDENDUM: December 29, 2025

John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts 38

ADDENDUM: September 19, 2026

John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts 40

Federalism & Local Law Enforcement

Washington, Chicago, and Portland 42

ADDENDUM: December 8, 2025

Charlotte and New Orleans 45

ADDENDUM: December 9, 2025

Chicago 46

ADDENDUM: December 12, 2025

Minnesota. 47

ADDENDUM: January 25, 2026

Minnesota and Maine 48

ADDENDUM: January 1, 2026

Los Angeles, Chicago, and Portland 49

ADDENDUM: July 15, 2026

Maine and Texas 51

The Free Press

Public Broadcasting System (PBS) 52

ADDENDUM: September 21, 2026

Muzzling the Press 53

Protecting the Environment

Earthrise 55

ADDENDUM: December 7, 2025

Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards & CO_2 Emissions 59

ADDENDUM: February 13,, 2026

Denier-In-Chief 60

Lady Liberty & Immigration

Lady Liberty 63

Academic Freedom
Federal Reserve Independence
Basic Research



Harvard University. Collectively, the United States has the finest system of higher education in the world. It attracts the best and brightest scholars and students from nearly every nation globally. Students don't queue up for a chance to come to places like Harvard because it is cheap. Rather they are seeking the best education and educational experience available anywhere.

The current Administration in Washington DC has threatened to withhold funding from the country's premier universities that had been appropriated by Congress for vital research in health, technology, and general scientific inquiry unless the government is given control over faculty recruitment, student admissions, curriculum, and provisions of student services, all under a false pretext as revealed in the ruling made by

US District Judge Allison Burroughs in favor of Harvard University in its lawsuit against the federal government. She wrote:

> "The idea that fighting antisemitism is Defendants' [i.e. the United States Department of Health and Human Services] true aim is belied by the fact that the majority of the demands they are making of Harvard to restore its research funding are directed, on their face, at Harvard's governance, staffing and hiring practices, and admissions policies—all of which have little to do with antisemitism and everything to do with Defendants' power and political views."
>
> Adding: "The First Amendment is important and the right to free speech must be zealously guarded. Free speech has always been a hallmark of our democracy."
>
> In summary, Judge Burroughs stated that it was "difficult to conclude anything other than that Defendants used antisemitism as a smokescreen for a targeted, ideologically-motivated assault on this country's premier universities, and did so in a way that runs afoul of the APA [Administrative Procedures Act of 1946], the First Amendment [Freedom of Speech] and Title VI [of the Civil Rights

> Act of 1964]. Further, their actions have jeopardized decades of research and the welfare of all those who could stand to benefit from that research, as well as reflect a disregard for the rights protected by the Constitution and federal statutes."

The ruling has been appealed, but should it be overturned, the future of higher education in America will be operating under a cloud, where free speech, academic freedom, and general scientific inquiry will be stifled. Surely, a future Congress and Administration in Washington DC would reverse this Orwellian threat, but in the meantime, there is likely to be an exodus of top faculty and a reluctance of the "best and brightest" to seek educational opportunities in America.

ADDENDUM: February 6, 2026

The Threats Continue: And Continue to Fail

The President's bullying tactics to force Harvard University to cave to his demands for White House control over the university's hiring, admissions, curriculum, and student services by withholding Congressionally mandated federal grants and imposing fines have been repeatedly rebuffed by the courts. The Administration eventually gave up on its appeals to withhold funding, but had continued to press for payment of $200 million fine that Harvard has refused to

pay. And that no funding would be forthcoming in the next fiscal year, over which negotiations have been ongoing.

Recently, it was reported that negotiators for the Administration had decided to drop the absurd demand that Harvard pay this ill-founded fine, still the subject of a lawsuit. But upon receiving this news, the President, always loathe to be seen as a loser, rejected that claim. Instead, he upped the demand to $1 billion. And so, the beat goes on ...

Speculation has it that Harvard is likely to employ one of the President's tactics used so often against legal actions taken against him for a variety of alleged civil and criminal offenses: delay! Why? There may be better days ahead, if Harvard can run out the clock until the November Midterm Congressional Elections, when the funding "ball" would be back in the "Congressional court" where respect for academic freedom and the value of federally funded research will receive a more favorable hearing despite the false recriminations coming from a rogue President.

The Federal Reserve. The 1970s was an era of global inflation that ravaged virtually all western (and many developing) economies around the world. It became the subject of intense academic research. The upshot was a clear conclusion that countries whose monetary authorities lack independence from the fiscal authorities (in the US that would translate into

independence of the Federal Reserve from the White House) created a nexus of policy decisions that led ultimately to lax monetary control and pernicious inflation.

Institutional reforms were subsequently chosen by many Western countries that focused on restructuring their central banks by providing them with a clear policy mandate—usually an inflation target between one and three percent—and granting them the independence needed to carry out that policy in accordance with the relevant macroeconomic data.[1] The fiscal authorities could not "lean on the monetary authorities," to overstimulate the economy with a policy of unsustainably low interest rates and rapid monetary expansion in support of a myopic goal of short-run economic growth that, in the long run, would ultimately induce high inflation and slow growth.[2] These reforms were adopted by the UK, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and subsequently the European Union, in frameworks largely modeled on the US Federal Reserve System.[3]

Since October, 1979, the United States has been blessed with an unbroken succession of extraordinary

[1]The Federal Reserve actually has 'dual mandate' of 'maximum sustainable employment and price stability' where, since the early 1990s, the latter has been explicitly interpreted as two percent inflation.

[2]The policy is referred to as *inflationary finance*, whereby the central bank purchases large quantities of government debt and effectively "pays for it" with rapid monetary growth, hence inducing the excessive inflation.

[3]West Germany, prior to the creation of the European Central Bank already had such a system in place, and was significantly less affected by the high inflation that marked the 1970s.

Federal Reserve Chairpersons: Paul Volcker, Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke, Janet Yellen, and Jerome Powell. They were appointed by Presidents from both parties and were allowed to operate with the degree of independence that is essential to an effective monetary policy. As a result, financial markets around the world look to the United States and the US Dollar as a safe-haven for investment and a model of financial stability.

Today, we are seeing that vital independence of the Federal Reserve under threat. If the threat is carried out, the United States will lose its preferential standing in financial markets, and over time, international capital flows will shift away from American securities, and the American economy will suffer.

In this regard, it should be noted that the Federal Reserve is the largest single employer of PhD economists in the world. And it is this extraordinary expertise, coupled with the ready availability of data (some of which is proprietary) that vests the institution with the best chance to carry out a sound monetary policy. But it cannot function well, if its leadership is hamstrung by the Administration. One can only hope that the independence of the Federal Reserve—that Congress has written into law and that the Supreme Court has to date upheld—will not be violated. The precedent that would be set by the loss of this independence would be extremely harmful to the economy over time. Again, a change in the at-

titude of those in power in Washington would likely eventually restore Fed independence if it is breached. But the damage to the reputation of American economic policymaking could be long-lasting.

Apart from the threat to Federal Reserve independence, there are troubling signs that policies being adopted in Washington DC, if continued, will mortgage much of our economic future. Explosive federal deficits, growing income inequality & income insecurity, disinvestment in basic research, and the mind-boggling, erratic imposition of tariffs that call into question the viability of America as a reliable trading partner will ultimately give us higher inflation and lower economic growth.

ADDENDUM: December 12, 2025

The Federal Open Market Committee. An encouraging note: Monetary policy is actually determined by the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), which consists of a Chair (which is always the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System), a Vice Chair (which is always the President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, where monetary policy is actually implemented), the remaining six Governors of the Federal Reserve Board, and four additional members made up of the Presidents of the remaining eleven Federal

Reserve District Banks, four of whom serve on a rotating basis.

The seven Governors are all appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate to a single 14-year (non-renewable) term. Their terms of office of the Presidents of the District Banks must be renewed periodically by the Directors of those Banks who are chosen as prominent representatives of industry, banking, and labor interests. These reappointments of the District Bank Presidents were all coming due in January, 2026. The concern was the current Administration would attempt to meddle in the selection process of the Bank Presidents by forcing appointments of individuals more willing to follow the wishes of the White House than make independent judgements based on what the data tell them is the correct policy actions to support a long-run stable economy. Fortunately, eleven of the twelve current Presidents have now been reappointed. The exception is due to a retirement. Since the policy decisions are the result of a majority vote of the twelve members of the FOMC, these appointments bode well for fending off Executive overreach in weakening Federal Reserve independence.

National Academy of Sciences & NASA. Since the breakup of Ma Bell, and the eventual restructuring of the famed Bell Labs (that was responsible for the development of the transistor, radio astronomy,

the artificial diamond, etc.), basic research has been largely relegated to our major research universities (where the loss of essential federal funding has now come under threat). The private sector doesn't participate as much in basic research, since its primary focus is on the discovery of new knowledge and not on technology that can be quickly turned to immediate profit. Only after this basic research produces technology that can be readily developed into marketable products do private business interests become engaged.

Policymakers in Washington DC have drastically cut research funding to the National Science Foundation (by 50 percent) and the National Institutes of Health. The former funding is broad-based research covering most areas of scientific inquiry; while the latter is dedicated toward such activities as finding better diagnoses of and cures for heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, etc. The pace of technological innovation is also under threat with cuts to NASA, the National Center for Atmospheric Research, the National Weather Service, et al. Overall, funding for this cutting-edge research is projected by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to fall by 33% this year from $45 billion to $30 billion, no longer making the US a world leader, with the level of funding dropping below that of China for the first time.

The effect of this disinvestment in basic research will not be felt immediately, but will gradually erode the economic future of America and continue to diminish its standing in the world. Many (but not all) of the lawsuits filed to restore much of this federal funding that was mandated by Congress have so far been successful, but continue to languish in appeals.

ADDENDUM: February 1, 2026

De-DOGE-ing the Federal Science Budget

It may have begun with the November, 2025 off-year elections, with a surge of support for Democrats. Since then, resistance to the President's capricious actions show signs of growing. And the President has found himself back-peddling on tariffs, immigration enforcement, attacks on America's long-time Allies, reducing US support for Ukraine, and his obsessive quest to "take Greenland." Fortunately, Congress has, at least on one score, solidly refuted the cavalier budget cuts to the federal support for scientific research (despite the President's distain for the subject) that was first proposed in the FY2026 Federal Budget he sent to Congress.

Instead of a 57% cut tot the National Science Foundation (NSF), Congress passed and on January 23, 2026 President signed a bill that amounted to a 3.4% cut, ie. from $9.06 billion to %8.875 billion vs. the proposed $3.9 billion. This funding is generally tar-

geted at basic research intended to seek out new knowledge, without the prospect of immediate financial rewards, and hence lacking private sector funding. The budget allocation to NASA was reinstated to $7.25 billion from the proposed $3.91 billion, which would have been a 47% cut from the previous year's funding level of $7.33 billion.

On wonders if the growing disaffection with the President's agenda will spillover to his disengagement with the western world in search of his America Alone policy, he's so mislabeled America First.

[Source: American Astronomical Society's website: https://aas.org/posts/news/2026/01/congress-passes-fiscal-year-2026-spending-bills-nsf-nasa-and-doe]

ADDENDUM: December 18, 2025

National Center for Atmospheric Research. The Administration's misguided attack on science continues. This time the focus on one of the world's leading Earth science research institutions, the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). It was announced that NCAR will be "broken up," claiming that it contributes to "climate alarmism."

This effort to muzzle science has two goals for the President: (1) It is yet another manifestation of his shameful statement before an international gathering at the United Nations that, despite all of the accumulated evidence to the contrary, "global warming is

the biggest con job ever perpetrated on the public." (2) The proposed breakup is also part of the President's campaign of retribution against Democratic-led states for it's rebuke of the President's attempt to pardon a former state election official who was convicted of multiple felonies associated with unauthorized access to voting machines offered to the President's supporters during the 2020 election. As is his custom, the President employs name-calling with another outlandish accusation that the Colorado governor is "'run" by Venezuelan gang members.

The Governor's response to the announcement: "If [this threat to dismantle NCAR] is true, public safety is at risk and science is being attacked. Climate change is real, but the work of NCAR goes far beyond climate science. NCAR delivers data around severe weather events like fires and floods that help our country save lives and property, and prevent devastation for families. If these cuts move forward, we will lose our competitive advantage against foreign powers and adversaries in the pursuit of scientific discovery." — Colorado Governor Jared Polis

And here's what the scientists are saying about this latest reprehensible assault by the Administration on another of America's world class institutions:

"It's the beating heart of our field. Generations of scientists have trained there, and almost everyone I

know relies on deep collaborations with NCAR scientists." — Kim Cobb, a climate scientist and the director of the Institute at Brown for Environment and Society

"[The institution is] quite literally our global mother ship [of atmospheric research]. Dismantling NCAR is like taking a sledgehammer to the keystone holding up our scientific understanding of the planet." — Katharine Hayhoe, a climate scientist at Texas Tech University

"What we are seeing is the administration canceling the freedom of scientific thought and inquiry." — Antonio Busalacchi, president of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research

The funding for NCAR is principally from the National Science Foundation, whose budget has been cut by the current Administration by fifty percent.

The Sovereignty of Democratic Nations



The United States has not always been on the right side of world history, but for the most part it has stood as a bulwark in support of the sovereignty of democratic nations—until recently.

Canada. Historically, Canada has been America's strongest ally and most important trading partner. However, the US-Canada relationship has now come under unprecedented strains with on-again, off-again tariffs and goading insults originating in the White House, with the ludicrous presidential declaration that Canada should become the 51st state.

President Ford, in the waning days of his presidency, advocated for statehood of Puerto Rico. The suggestion never received a second look by Congress. If one is looking for compelling arguments to extend statehood status, it might be best to look a little closer to home. Residents of the District of Columbia, with a population exceeding that of the state of Vermont, are vexed with what would seem to be most un-

American: ‘taxation without representation’ in Congress.

ADDENDUM: Januar 25, 2026

The latest threat after Davos. Prime Minister Karney has spoken since taking office of the need to weaken the dependence of the Canadian economy on the United States, which he no longer perceived to be a reliable trading partner. He has taken steps in that direction in negotiations with Europe and most recently with an agreement with China, whereby tariffs on Chinese EVs would be substantially reduced in exchange for similar reductions on Canadian canola oil and other products.

The US President’s initial reaction was that if it benefited Canada it was a ‘good thing.’ But after Karney’s speech at the Davos world economic gathering in which he denounced the US following the President’s renewed threats to ‘take Greenland,’ without consultation with Allies if necessary, and his new threats of tariffs on any NATO country that pushed back on his territorial ambitions—which was universal—the President changed his tune. He threatened Canada with 100% tariffs if the trade deal with China went through.

In Karney’s speech at Davos—greeted with a standing ovation from the conferees—he proclaimed that the President’s actions have led to—not a transition in the relationship between the United States and its

Western Allies, but to a 'rupture.' And in an apparent reference to the President's prior claim to acquiring Canada as the 51st state, his words were unmistakable:

"If you're not at the table, you're on the menu."

Panama. The false claim that the Panamanian government has given favored nation status to Chinese shipping has been cited by the current Administration in Washington DC as a reason for the US to retake control of the Panama Canal. Force, it was stated, could be used, if necessary, and any resistance against that military adventurism could result in a military takeover of the entire country.

In fact, Panama has completed construction of a second waterway through the Canal to accommodate today's larger cargo vessels, and by all credible accounts, the Panama Canal Authority has been an efficient, effective steward of the Canal and has lived up to the terms of its treaties with the United States, under which commerce would be allowed to flow unimpeded through the Panama Canal, without regard to the country of origin.

Ukraine. Until very recently, to resolve the war between Ukraine and Russia, the current Administration in Washington DC has touted appeasement with Russia whereby it would annex sovereign Ukrainian territory that it seeks to claim militarily, with the

admonition to Ukraine that there is no other realistic option. It is reminiscent of Neville Chamberlain's agreement with Hitler to cede otherwise sovereign Czech territory to Germany in exchange for a false peace agreement.

It appears that after the President's ill-fated attempts to sweet-talk Putin into compliance by, among other things, accusing Ukraine of starting the war, he has come to the realization of what President Zelensky had tried to impress upon him which is that you cannot trust Putin. However, given the many flip-flops of the Administration on this issue, there's no guarantee that his latest pronouncement that Ukraine can win back all of its sovereign territory will carry any weight in future US policy.

Greenland. In a recent poll taken just before their last general election, 85% of Greenlanders were opposed to any formal integration with the United States, while only 9% were in favor. Nonetheless, the President has stated unequivocally that "we must get Greenland." And he has not ruled out military force in order to achieve that objective. Sovereignty be damned.

ADDENDUM: December 22, 2025

Greenland and the Monroe Doctrine. The current President's obsession with territorial conquests was again on display with the appointment of a "special envoy" for Greenland with the task of fostering

an unwelcome effort "to make Greenland a part of the U.S." The Administration's verbal saber-rattling was met in a joint statement from the Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Greenlandic Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen with these words:

> "We have said it before. Now, we say it again. National borders and the sovereignty of states are rooted in international law. Greenland belongs to the Greenlanders, and the U.S. shall not take over Greenland. We expect respect for our joint territorial integrity."

One can only hope that the implicit threat of the President, when he stated the he could not rule out taking over Greenland by force—apparently consistent with his reinterpretation of the Monroe Doctrine[4]—will be not be put to the test.

Brazil. Perhaps the most egregious action to date taken against a sovereign nation (since most of the other threats are mere bluster) is the combination of a 50% tariff on Brazilian goods coupled with threats of more punitive actions to come, all in response to the conviction of former President Bolsonaro for plotting a coup after he lost the general election.

Tariffs can be authorized for either national security reasons or unfair trade practices undertaken by another nation. Neither of these reasons were cited

[4] https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-National-Security-Strategy.pdf

for imposing these tariffs, only that the current US President didn't approve of the verdict from the criminal justice system of democratic Brazil. He cited the fact that these charges resembled those he would have had to face had they not been dismissed upon his reelection. It's unclear to me how these tariffs are legal.

ADDENDUM: January 9, 2026



North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In pursuit of its policy of *America Alone* (aka America First), the current Administration is withdrawing from sixty-six international organizations, conventions, and treat-ies—YES! 66! They were designed to foster multinational cooperation on issues ranging from health, education, and the environment to peace and security.

When the President was asked after this announcement, if there were any limits on his global powers, he replied: "Yeah, there is one thing. My own morality. My own mind. It's the only thing that can stop me."

(This coming from a convicted fraud, a convicted sex offender, a convicted felon, and a compulsive liar.) While this exchange referred contextually to international law (and presumably U.S. law), it's clear that the man wants to believe he has complete unfettered powers to act in any cavalier or capricious manner that he may choose. To say the least: *That's astonishing!*

Even more astonishing when we begin to glimpse his world vision and bring his personal ambition into focus. International cooperation is being replaced by a desire for American dominance in those countries where such subjugation is feasible—largely through military threats and intimidation relying primarily on bullying tactics—viz. in the Western Hemisphere. Europe and Asia are unlikely to be so easily kowtowed to the whims of the President. Hence, 'disengagement' from virtually ALL formal foreign commitments is the byword.

This attitude has profound consequences, when we are reminded of the President's professed territorial ambitions. He's stated some of them before: Canada, the Panama Canal, and Greenland. They must be taken more seriously now, in the aftermath of the military successes of the government's illegal drone attacks in international waters in the Caribbean and off the Pacific Coast of Central America, and the illegal abduction of the unelected, brutal dictator of

Venezuela and America's pending takeover of that country. What comes next? Cuba?—which is the prize Marco Rubio has so longed for—or Columbia? And for a diversion: a military strike in Iran? Or Nigeria?

Perhaps the most immediately disconcerting of these prospects is the President's insistence that Greenland must become part of the United States—against the strong opposition of Greenlanders and Danes—and that he's determined will happen within his term of office—even if it takes military intervention. The fact that Greenland is, and has been for 300 years, a part of Denmark, which is a NATO ally, is apparently no deterrent.

When the Alliance was formed after World War II, an invasion of one NATO member by another was never envisioned when the charter was instituted with the proviso that an attack on one member nation is an attack on all. This Article of the charter has only been enforced once in its history—in defense of the United States after 9/11.

To date, NATO members have unequivocally supported Greenland's sovereignty. Yet, this provision in the NATO charter is the perfect foil for the President's desire to leave NATO. The United States can invade Greenland, easily overpowering the 57,000 citizens, and when the NATO members cry "FOUL!" the President simply withdraws from the Alliance. It's an outcome for which he advocated when he first ran for

office in 2016, having declared NATO an institution that had outlived its relevance. That was, of course, before Russia invaded Ukraine! So now, the President has the ideal setup to make the American departure from NATO happen! It makes you wonder: Is the United Nations next?

ADDENDUM: February 4, 2026



The United Nations: Will It Survive?

It's unimaginable: Shuttering the iconic United Nations building in New York City. But money talks. In the UN charter, member states have committed to financial support allocated in proportion to the country's GDP. The US is thus the largest single donor, with commitments totaling 22 percent of the budget, followed by China with 20 percent. A significant problem with this dependence on prior commitments is that the current Administration—while not alone—has refused to pay its bills, and, if this reneging on America's obligations is not remedied, the United Nations will no longer have sufficient funds to keep the doors open.

As part of the current Administration's 'America Alone' policy (aka 'America First'), an executive order was signed by the President to withdraw its participation from 66(!) international treaties and organizations to which the US has been a contributor, of which 41 were sponsored by the United Nations. America has become a 'deadbeat' to the tune of $2.19 billion owed for the UN's regular budget, along with $1.88 billion for active peace-keeping missions and another $528 million for past peace-keeping missions. That adds up to over $4.2 billion, roughly one-third of the total $1.59 trillion in unpaid member dues! This compares with the current UN budget (unanimously approved) for 2026 of $3.45 billion! (Included in this figure is a $577 million budget cut, coinciding with 18.8 percent reduction in staff.)

The Secretary General of the UN has stated that the organization will run out of cash by July, 2026 if member nations—with America as the biggest 'deadbeat'—don't begin to fulfill their commitments and pay up. It's clear that the current Administration is not inclined to continue its support. Why?

Is it just more of 'America Alone'? Or is it because the President has now decided to expand the mandate for his so-called Board of Peace to extend beyond its original purpose of rebuilding Gaza—as part of the fragile cease-fire agreement—to cover instead whatever mission may subsequently be chosen? Presumably that would include peace-keeping, anywhere in

the world? (And this comes after the President has refused to pay for the US share of the costs for UN peace-keeping missions!)

There would be a significant amount of money to do so, if the President persuades the many signatories that he has personally invited to join. Assuming, of course, they don't follow America's lead to become 'deadbeats' and choose not to comply with membership fees, since each member must contribute $1 billion up front. Evidently, that includes $1 billion of US taxpayer money, which could have gone a long way toward shoring up the United Nations!

Outlandish as it sounds, there is some evidence that the President would like to see the UN disappear and be replaced by his Board of Peace. When asked: he replied that it "might' happen. (He later seemed to back track, declaring that the UN should be given a chance to survive due to its "great potential.")

At first blush this new organization would seem to contradict the President's 'America Alone' policy. But not when you realize that the man's self-adulation is reflected in its structure, with himself as, effectively, CEO for life! He has unlimited control over who sits on this 'Board,' currently filled by (mostly) his admiring acolytes, such as his son-in-law. He would no doubt be picking and choosing how to spend the money. And money DOES talk.

ADDENDUM: March 8, 2026



Lebanon: Casualty of Another Mideast War

Lebanon. After the invasion of Iran by the US and Israel, the terrorist organization Hezbollah, entrenched in southern Lebanon, fired a rocket into Israel. It caused little damage and no causalities. It was as if they were sending a symbolic non-lethal message of support for their partner in crime, Iran. Israel responded, typically, with a disproportionately intense round of air strikes, and the killing in the streets and homes in southern Beirut began—again!

The Lebanese government (such as it is) has disavowed any support for the actions of Hezbollah, and declared its neutrality in the latest war in the Middle East. That did not deter the Israeli response. Israel had already weakened the ability of Hezbollah to wage war by decapitating much of its leadership. Their position was further strengthened by the fall of

the Assad regime in Syria, and now Iran—Hezbollah's chief arms supplier—is in the cross-hairs of the US and Israeli military strikes.

After the destruction and slaughter the world witnessed in Gaza, one can only surmise that Lebanon will be in for much of the same, perhaps on a somewhat lesser scale. But an emboldened Israel—as if it needed more bravado—is likely to seize upon this moment to wage war against another of its sworn enemies. And Lebanon and the Lebanese will be its victims.

ADDENDUM: April 8, 2026



3 Mysterious American Flags

They appeared overnight across the street from my residence: 3 small American flags. Why someone chose to anonymously plant them there I don't know. My guess is that it was an act that felt to them to

be one of patriotism, given that no such flag had yet been included within the collection before my house.

Their appearance has coincided with our President's threat to murder "a whole civilization" with aerial bombing in Iran. That is hardly something to be proud of, but I am a patriot who believes in the better nature of Americans, most of whom would choose diplomacy and peace over assassination and war. I could think of no better way nor any better time to express that belief:

"Peace Begins with Us All."

UPDATE: Just as mysteriously as the American flags had first appeared, they were taken down in the middle of the night. Perhaps they served, if only for a brief few days, as a gentle reminder of the gravity of America's role in the global affairs of war and peace.

ADDENDUM: April 13, 2026



The Welcome Defeat of Hungary's Victor Orban

Hungary and the European Union. There appears to be good news with the democratic defeat of Victor Orban as Hungary's Prime Minister. His corrupt regime has long represented a stalwart defender of extremist, right-wing nationalism, and has been a beacon of light for like-minded authoritarian wannabes seeking the reins of power in other democratic nations.

He is a close friend of the current US President who has declared his "love" of the man, just he had similarly described his "love" for the North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un. Orban is also an ally of Russia, having cultivated a close relationship with President Putin. The latter has assured him reliable oil and natural gas supplies in appreciation of Orban's staunch opposition to Ukraine, with his veto of EU's 90-billion-Euro funding proposal aimed at military support Ukrainian efforts at self-defense. For that proposal to be enacted a unanimous vote from the Member Nations of the European Union is required. Orban's refusal came despite the concession made to Hungary that it would not have to contribute to the fund.

This electoral defeat is also a black eye for the current US President, who has led an effort to promote such regimes as Orban's around the world, and con-

tinues to lose public support at home for the President's unpopular war with Iran, his attacks on American institutions, and his administration's mishandling of domestic affairs, including his ICE raids on American homes, businesses, and places of worship, all while Americans fret over the economy, and our leadership in the world. We can hope that this anti-authoritarian rebuke at the ballot box can be repeated in elections across Europe and Latin America. And that sentiment for anti-American authoritarian populism is severely upbraided this Fall, when Americans go to the polls.

Protecting the Crown Jewels of America



Smithsonian Institution. One of the crown jewels of America is the Smithsonian Institution. It is comprised of 19 museums and the National Zoo, collectively making it the largest "museum" in the world. Its stated objective when first created in 1846 was "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge."

Unfortunately, its stellar history may be tarnished if the current Administration gets its way with whitewashing the various museums' presentations of American history. It is currently uncertain how far they will go to distort the facts—mostly by omission, such as efforts to downplay the atrocities of slavery or the treatment of Native Americans.

Fortunately, there is a private initiative being undertaken by Citizen Historians for the Smithsonian that is currently underway to document and preserve with photographs ALL current exhibits. While future Administrations will hopefully reconstitute the Smithsonian to its former self, this documentation will be a vivid 'before and after' story of what was attempted during the current hiatus from reality with the creation of a faux American past. Here is their website: www.citizenhistorians.org

National Park Service. Another crown jewel of America is its National Parks. Draconian budget cuts to the National Park Service of 75% are underway! This has led to laying off park rangers, shuttering educational programs—mostly for the youth, and closing sections of the parks to visitors due to lack of funds for maintenance. These cuts are having an immediate effect on the joy and enrichment of American heritage that one normally experiences when visiting, say, Yosemite or the Grand Canyon. But if these cuts are maintained, they will ultimately lead to a slow

degradation of the parks from neglect.

Again, I am optimistic that future Administrations will see the potential tragedy of these hasty, mindless budget cuts and restore funding so that the glories of the nation's parks can once again be experienced by visitors. Regrettably, the current Administration has shamefully mandated a whitewashing of displays at the National Parks similar to that projected for the Smithsonian. However, a private citizen group has again formed to document these changes.

ADDENDUM: December 29, 2025



John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts. The narcissism of the current President seems to know no bounds. It's becoming a familiar pattern. Target an institution. Fire everyone at the top. Install a cadre of loyalists from among your cult followers to replace them. Tell them the institution is to be transformed in the name of a ready-made faux threat to America or American

culture. Then, sit back and watch them trash the institution.

We've watched the disgraceful gutting of two of America's crown jewels: the Smithsonian Institution and the National Park Service. Defunded and shamefully demanded of them that they whitewash our cultural history and heritage that they were meant to preserve. Could it get any worse? Could this man's self-adulation be ever more on display than the demand that the information on his two impeachments be removed from the Smithsonian? Could his cavalier attitude toward preservation of our cherished national treasures be more contemptible than his trashing of our national park system?

Even to the jaded eyes of those who have lost their faith in the country's current leadership and are biding their time in disgust until our country's current nightmare is over, the desecration of the John F. Kennedy MEMORIAL Center for the Performing Arts was enough to make one physically sick.

After banning many of its performances for not catering to the President's (questionable) taste, with the result that season ticket sales have plummeted and many of the nation's premier performing artists have blacklisted this once-venerable institution (resulting in the cancellations of the traditional Christmas Eve and New Year's celebrations), his appointed loyalist board members follow his bidding to complete its desecration by plastering his name on this vaunted

Memorial to a generally beloved former President. And, of course, his name, not President Kennedy's, comes first.

My mind returns to the Joseph McCarthy hearings on un-American activities, when the Senator was asked, as I would ask the current President: *"Have you no sense of decency?"*

ADDENDUM: September 19, 2026

John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts. The President seems to be regressing into pre-adolescence. After the courts have repeatedly rebuffed the President's minions who wish to defile the Kennedy Center by rebranding the memorial with the current President's name affixed to the building's facade, which led to cancellations of performances by world-renown artists and plummeting ticket sales, the President has declared an "I'll take my ball and go home." response. He has threatened to withhold the $257 million allocated by Congress for the restoration of the Kennedy Center. He has, quite unbelievably, proclaimed that if he doesn't get recognition, i.e. his name on the building and its property, he will withhold those funds and demolish the iconic structure itself! Certainly, he'll be restrained from this despotic act of vandalism for the sake this man's vanity!

But of course the man's egotistical attempts to leave his mark on the nation's capital has not stopped

with this disgraceful display of narcissism. Apart from tearing down the West Wing of the White House to build his cherished ballroom without any approvals or authorization, he has also proffered the preposterous proposal to construct a gaudy 250-foot gilded arch on Monument Island. In its conception, by ignoring the disruptive integrity of the hallowed ground on which it would set, the proposed structure is reminiscent of Mussolini's vanity project, the Vittoriano, a.k.a. in local parlance 'The Typewriter' or 'The Wedding Cake', that was built after destruction of the ancient roadway through the heart of the city of Rome.

In reality, there is a sad tragedy lying behind these disgraceful faux simulacra conjured up by the President. They represent the desperation of an octogenarian President fearful of dying without leaving his garish mark on the nation's capital. And, while efforts to forestall the shameful makeover of the District may yet succeed in large measure, the resistance by the elected representatives to this man's whimsical treatment of the property of the Republic that ultimately belongs to the people, has been disgraceful. Those aiding and abetting him will discover that they have been bending a knee to a man who's real place in history will surely find him dwelling on the ranked list of Presidents alongside Warren G. Harding, Andrew Johnson, and James Buchanan.

Federalism & Local Law Enforcement



Washington, Chicago, and Portland. In the *Federalist Papers*, James Madison outlined a set of principals that would limit the power of the federal government by explicitly reserving certain rights to the states. Among these provisions was the mandate that local law enforcement be relegated exclusively to the states. Federal agents were forbidden to take part in local policing, unless Congress declares the existence of a national emergency or a threat from a foreign power.

In practice, this Constitutional provision has been respected throughout much of US history, at least since the Civil War. However, an exception may occur should federal intervention be deemed essential to protect American citizens from abuse by state or local law enforcement agents. Such was the case, for example, when US Marshals were sent into Alabama to enforce the civil rights of black Americans during the 1960s.

But in general, when local emergencies do arise within a state, the National Guard may be activated and deployed by the state's governor. If additional resources are needed, such as guardsmen from another state or active duty military, the state's governor could submit a request for that support to the President. However, with the exceptions cited above—national emergency, foreign threat, or abuse of citizens by local law enforcement—the President may not unilaterally impose federal troops, such as federally activated National Guard or the Marines, on local communities without the governor's consent.

The current Administration in Washington DC attempted to circumvent this provision of the Constitution by sending federal troops into Los Angeles—expressly against the wishes of the governor and local officials—ostensibly in order to protect ICE agents then deployed throughout the city to arrest suspected illegal immigrants. In a lawsuit filed by the State of California against the President, Judge Charles R. Breyer of the Federal District Court in San Francisco has ruled that the Administration "systematically used armed soldiers" to perform law enforcement functions such as crowd control, traffic blockades and detentions, despite clear limits under the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act, which bars the use of the military for civilian policing without explicit approval from Congress. To local officials, the presence of these federal troops were seen to aggravate, not ameliorate

the tensions within the city. The ruling is being appealed.

This scenario is likely to play out again in Portland, OR and Chicago, IL, where the President has claimed that violent crime waves exist, despite the fact that crime in both cities is on the wane. Governors from both states have filed lawsuits against the President similar to one he lost in LA.

The District of Columbia is a special case. Much of its land mass is federal property, over which the President has control. While he does not have control over local law enforcement, he seems to be getting away with allowing federal troops to patrol the streets, armed with automatic weapons.

You have to ask two questions: (1) Where was the President during the insurrection of January 6, 2020 when there was a definite riot underway? It took the Vice President to finally order in the National Guard. (2) Is Judge Breyer right when he characterized the action taken in LA as part of an effort to create "a national police force with the President as its chief?" Is that what his efforts at creating a "strike force" is all about? One can only hope that the courts won't allow a revengeful President a free hand, should he develop a taste for violence.

ADDENDUM: December 8, 2025



Charlotte and New Orleans. Just the facts. US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) have been added to the federal law enforcement numbers of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in raids in both Charlotte, NC and New Orleans, LA. Thus far, nationalized units of the National Guard have not been deployed in these police actions, which have been ruled illegal and unconstitutional in both Los Angeles and Portland, and is being challenged in Chicago as well.

The raids in both Charlotte and New Orleans ostensibly are focused on apprehending illegal immigrants. The President has claimed that violence caused by "illegals" is running rampant in those cities despite the fact that incidents of violent crime have been falling in both, and there is no evidence linking the immigrant communities to violent crime, nor have federal law enforcement provided evidence that a significant proportion of those arrested have ANY

criminal record.

Local authorities in Charlotte and New Orleans have made it clear that they do not want this federal policing to take place in their cities and have not been a party to the raids. Requests for detailed information on the locations, times, and circumstances of the arrests, along with the identities of those arrested have gone unfulfilled.

ADDENDUM: December 9, 2025

Chicago. The Illinois Legislature passed a bill, signed by Governor Pritzker on December 9. 2025, to place limits on actions taken within the state by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents ostensibly targeting illegal immigrants.

The new law prohibits arrests within 1000 feet of courthouses—the favorite hangout for ICE agents seeking to make arrests as residents emerge from the building after hearings, and to make it easier for residents to sue if they believe their rights are violated. It also places procedural restrictions on arrests, including statements as whether body cameras were worn, masks hid the faces of the arresting ICE agents, identifying clothing or badges were prominently displayed, those arrested were read their rights, and whether physical restraint was unduly used by the arresting agents. Restrictions were also placed on arrests at schools, churches, hospitals, and workplaces

to ensure that those arrested received their civil rights, and to avoid the abuse of authority by arresting agents.

These measures are more extensive than those already imposed by California and New York. As the State Representative from Chicago, Lilian Jimémez stated the laws intent:

> "Residents should be able to go to court, take their kid to day care and have access to the university they attend without fear they will be kidnapped off the street."

It's likely that the law will be challenged in the courts.

ADDENDUM: December 12, 2025

Minnesota. Will Minneapolis, MN be the next city to be raided by national police forces, aka, Immigration Control and Enforcement (ICE) agents, US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), or Nationalized National Guard units? ICE has already begun, with the bulk of their arrests focused on the large Somali community in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, who have been subjected to racial profiling.

It comes on the heals of the President's racist, xenophobic verbal attacks on the Somali community—including Somali-Americans—using hate-speech apparently designed to garner core support from those white supremacist among his followers. If you missed it, here are some samples:

> *"I don't want them [Somalis] in our country . . . Their country stinks . . . And we're going to go the wrong way if we keep taking in garbage [Somali immigrants] into our country."*
>
> *"Why are we having all these people from* shithole countries *[referring to Haiti, El Salvador, and African nations] come here?"*

And then this quote from an earlier pronouncement:

> *"Illegal immigration is poisoning the blood of our nation."*

It makes you wonder what this man has read and kept tucked away in a warm place in his long-term memory. Perhaps, as has been noted in the press, it was from the rhetoric of a Nationalist from an earlier era:

> *"All great cultures of the past perished only because the originally creative race died out from blood poisoning."* — Adolf Hitler

ADDENDUM: January 25, 2026

Minnesota and Maine. In the wake of two killings (murders?) of US citizens in Minneapolis by ICE agents, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has refused to investigate the incidents. One of those

shootings having been 'justified' by the victim's alleging pulling a gun when he attempted to aid a protestor who had been pepper-spayed, when the 'gun' turned out to be a cell phone. The DHS also denied access to information requested by local authorities to proceed with their own investigation. The 'faux' national police force has now entered Maine. Once again, the state's Governor and local authorities have demanded they leave rather than stir up conflict, which some have seen as an effort to justify their presence.

Congress may finally be taking action by withholding funding, although that remains unclear. But even so, it appears to be much too little, much too late.

ADDENDUM: January 1, 2026

LA, Portland, and Chicago. It is a modest victory for the Constitution! The Supreme Court failing to support the Administration's appeal of court rulings against the illegal deployment of federalized National Guardsmen in Chicago, over the objections of the Mayor and Governor, the current President saw the writing on the wall. He deactivated all National Guardsmen, formerly deployed in LA, Portland, and Chicago, rather than facing the humiliation of additional losses in the courts, given this precedent-setting ruling.

> "At this preliminary stage, the Government has failed to identify a source of authority

> that would allow the military to execute the laws in Illinois," the ruling noted.

Here are the reactions:

> "The President deployed these brave men and women against their own communities and without regard for the constitution and federal law. We welcome our California National Guard service members back to state service."
> – California Governor Gavin Newsom

> "[The Supreme Court's decision was] an important step in curbing the Trump Administration's consistent abuse of power and slowing Trump's march toward authoritarianism."
> Illinois Governor JB Pritzker

Of course, as David Brooks once said of authoritarian wannabes: they must never admit they're wrong. So, how did the President attempt to couch this defeat in the courts with this announcement? He again made unsubstantiated false claims concerning the level of crime in these cities, then added a threat:

> "We will come back, perhaps in a much different and stronger form, when crime begins to soar again. Only a question of time!"

One can only hope that the Governor Prirtzker is right and that the Supreme Court has finally begun to curtail the out-of-control President who seems to be

developing a taste for more violence. He has followed the tried-and-(usually)true path when the President is so far down in the polls because of his domestic policies: Go start an international military conflict elsewhere. Now, he's chosen the Caribbean, Venezuela, Columbia, Nigeria, and Iran. It's hard to believe that the additional deaths he'll be responsible for in these military adventures will win back his failing poll numbers.

ADDENDUM: July 15, 2026

Maine and Texas. The beat goes on. Two. more apparent murders by ICE agents. Masked ICE marauders working under the pressure of 'quotas' for mass arrests continue their Storm Trooper tactics. No body cameras (which they were mandated to wear). No accountability. First in Texas, then the young man in Maine working legally at two jobs to support his family: killed. 5 shots point blank while he sat helpless in his car. When is this going to end?!

Could there be a bit of positive news in Maine? After the long, endless Epstein saga that seems to find new life, just when you thought it was finally put to rest. And with a convicted sex offender (a sentence again reaffirmed by the courts) in the White House (along with his convictions on fraud and felony charges), we finally see a man with a repeated troubled past pressured out of the Democratic primary race for Senate. Will the Texas follow suite in the

Fall election and rebuke the scandalous Republican nominee? Could it be that America is beginning to tire of reprobates in public office?

The Free Press



Public Broadcasting System (PBS). The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), and National Public Radio (NPR) have been targets of extreme fiscal conservatives for some time. More recently, they have fallen victims to attacks by ideological extremists—including the current President—who have accused them of promoting "biased, radical liberal" dogma. This year, federal support for these institutions has been drastically cut, and in the case of CPB, completely eliminated. As a consequence, CPB—which supports programming on PBS and NPR stations nationwide—has been forced to shut down. The local public television and public radio affiliates will have

to find other means of support. Apparently, NPR stations in smaller rural communities will be the most affected, and it's projected that many of them will be forced to leave the airways.

It could be argued whether federal support should be granted to public broadcasting in general, and examples exist where state-sponsored media have become propaganda tools of the state. But this has not been true of PBS and NPR, whose programming is not controlled by the state, and I've seen no evidence that PBS news reporting is significantly biased one way or another.

It's troublesome that traditional news outlets in general are becoming less relevant today, being replaced by social media posts. It's particularly sad to see the willful denigration by policymakers, particularly by the President, of honestly vetted news reporting. I wonder: How well do you suppose his personal social media outlet *PravdaSocial*—oops, pardon my Russian!—would stand up to scrutiny?

But I guess the days of Walter Cronkite are long gone, when "the most trusted man in America" was a TV news anchor. Throw in AI with its ever more sophisticated means of falsifying reality, and you wonder where it will all lead.

ADDENDUM: September 21, 2026

Muzzling the Press. This week the Current President continued his Administration's attempt to con-

trol the news. CNN, MSNBC, and Politico were all banned from the White House. In response, the television press pool, consisting of FOX News, CNN, ABC News, CBS News, and NBC News, which rotate coverage of the President in his travels and at events where the physical space is too small for the entire press corps, announced that they will discontinue pool coverage of the President. And in the interim, they have jointly initiated a lawsuit against the Current Administration, citing its violation of the First Amendment rights of freedom of the press. They pointed to the President's stated reason for the ban that he dislikes their reportage.

This ban follows other efforts by the dictator-wannabe President to control the news, including lawsuits filed against the Wall Street Journal and the BBC, along with barring the Associated Press from the Oval Office for its decision to refrain from indulging the President in his whimsical attempt to rename the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America.

In addition, the Pentagon has severely restricted access to information associated with the policies and actions of the Department of Defense, which the nutty President also wants to rename as the Department of War — that is actually more consistent with his belligerent tendencies, as the world has sadly watched not only the precipitous American/Israeli invasion of Iran, but the military adventurism in Central and South America (not to mention his intemperate off-

the-cuff threats against Greenland, Panama, Canada, and Brazil). It was the "mistake" of the Pentagon reporters to report the truth, which the President and the Secretary of Defense tried to hide from the public.

The Current President has always had trouble with the truth. So, he has chosen to turn his nose up at the US Constitution's Bill of Rights, and repeatedly attempt to silence the free press. Let's hope the third branch of government, the Judiciary (given the unwillingness of Congress, weighed down by the President's spineless sycophants fearful of challenging his actions) will restrain his narcissistic tendencies as he becomes ever more detached from reality.

Protecting the Environment



Earthrise. Rachael Carlson's publication of *Silent Spring* in 1962 is often seen as the beginning of the environmental movement of the 1960s and 70s. It

provided the intellectual arguments unrelentingly insistent upon the need for humanity to change its ways and protect the planet. In 1968, the famous photograph, that came to be known as *Earthrise*, taken by Apollo 8 astronaut William Anders as the space craft emerged from the darkness in the first-ever manned lunar orbit, became the iconic symbol of the movement.

In today's world, with 24/7 viewing of the Earth from space, it may be difficult to appreciate the impact that this photograph had at that time. There was a visceral reaction to the image that went beyond the intellectual arguments of Rachael Carlson. It was stunning! Seeing the beautiful blue planet suspended in space, and cast against the desolate lunar landscape, was for many a moment, as William Anders was later to describe when he snapped the picture: "We set out to explore the moon, and instead *we discovered the Earth*."

It was clear that it would take action from the federal government to meet the demands promulgated during the first Earth Day celebration in 1970 for the protection of "the water we can drink and the air we can breathe". And Congress delivered. The decade to follow saw the passage of the landmark legislation: Clean Air Act of 1970 (aggressively updating its 1963 predecessor) and the Clean Water Act of 1972, in addition to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Since those early days, the envi-

ronmental laws have been extensively amended, thus expanding the essential regulatory authority of the EPA.

But that was then. Now, with the potentially even more perilous impact of global warming, we have a President shamefully defying science and declaring before the assembled representatives of world leaders at the United Nations that "global warming is the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world". [Source: International Energy Agency.]

Thus far, the current Administration has:

- abrogated its international treaty obligations with the EU and 193 other nations that was agreed under the Paris Climate Accords;
- attempted to halt development of clean energy sources, particularly wind and solar;
- encouraged greater reliance on coal and natural gas for US energy production by relaxing environmental laws relating to the burning of fossil fuels;
- and set itself the goal of eliminating the EPA, which would take an Act of Congress—meanwhile, gutting the agency's funding and personnel and inhibiting its environment enforcement procedures by executive fiat.

All of this is coming at a perilous time, when worldwide demand for electricity, after hovering at 750K gigawatts in the US over the past decade, is projected to rise to over 900K gigawatts within the next five years due to the unrelenting demand from AI. It's a demand most likely to be met by natural gas, made more so as renewable energy projects are being curtailed in the United States due to the current Administration's opposition.

Rather than focusing on the sustainability of traditional fossil fuel energy sources, the President has suggested that adherence to (what he perceives to be the misguided) efforts at combatting climate change will result in severe economic losses worldwide, and he has issued a verbal rebuke of those attempting such efforts. One such person is the billionaire Australian mining executive, Andrew Forescue, who is committed to demonstrating through his own business practices (in a traditionally very polluting industry) that global emissions can be drastically reduced without compromising profits. After receiving this rebuke from the President and upon hearing his comments at the United Nations, Forescue responded:

"You have no basis of fact to make that statement. No matter how many times you repeat a lie. It's still a lie. We have everything on our side. All you can do is hide the truth."

ADDENDUM: December 7, 2025

Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards & CO_2 Emissions. In 2023, approximately 40 percent of world energy consumption was derived from oil and oil products, accounting for approximately one-third of total CO_2 emissions. Roughly one-fourth of the contribution was from transportation.

In the United States, CO_2 emissions peaked in 2005, and had fallen by approximately 23 percent by 2023. During this same period, energy consumption rose by over 60 percent. The major factors in the reduced CO_2 emissions from the United States were the sharp decline in coal-fired electric power generation and a roughly ten percent reduction in oil usage in transportation. The latter had been given significant impetus by the stringent Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards imposed on the manufacturers of passenger cars and light trucks first introduced in 1975, and gradually raised as technology accommodated the new industry-wide requirements.

In the past few years, much of the improved average fuel efficiency was seen to come from the growth of electric vehicles (EVs), as battery technology (lowering costs while extending the range of vehicles between recharging) along the rapid spread recharging stations nationwide would continue to increase demand for EVs. Subsidizes for the purchase of EVs was intended to accelerate this transition away com-

bustion engine autos.

However, the current Administration is proposing to lower the current benchmark on passenger cars and light trucks for the 2031 model year to 34.5 mpg from 50 mpg. This action is consistent with the Administration's stated opinion (by the President) that global warming is a "con job," and efforts to move the economy's energy sector away from renewables and back toward fossil fuels. In addition, the subsidies for the purchase of EVs (and other green energy appliances) have been removed.

With the absence of US representatives in this year's COP25 meetings in Brazil, and an apparent general weakening of global commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, there now seems little hope that the detrimental effects of global warming (perhaps catastrophic in some parts of the world) will be abated any time soon.

ADDENDUM: February 13, 2026

Denier-In-Chief

Just when you thought it couldn't get any worse! And even glimpses of sanity: the Administration's partial reversals of tariffs (although they remain on average 5 times what they were when it came into office); the back-peddling on the demand to 'take' Greenland; the softening of rhetoric against NATO and the UN (and we'll see just how long that lasts); and the

Congressional rebuke of the whimsical tariffs imposed on Canada, Mexico, and Brazil. There was even a positive sign of Congressional independence that was more than symbolic with the elimination of most of the DOGE budget cuts to the federal support for scientific research for the current fiscal year.

Now, the Administration renounces the legal foundation upon which the federal government may enact environmental legislation associated with regulating the nation's air quality: the "endangerment finding" in the Supreme Court ruling in 2007 in *Massachusetts vs EPA*. The ruling concluded that emissions from the burning of fossil fuels endangers the public health and welfare, and therefore legislation designed to curb such emissions is Constitutionally valid.

It comes after the 'Denier-In-Chief' had proclaimed that global warming is a 'hoax' and a 'con job' perpetrated on the public. However, nearly 20 years after that ruling, the scientific evidence is today ever more definitive that global warming not only exists but is a principal driver of extreme weather patterns emerging around the world. Floods, draughts, fires, hurricanes, tornadoes—all more intense, and getting worse each year, as algae plumes and coral bleaching in tropical waters with record sea water temperatures (exceeding 100 degrees off the coast of Florida!), while glacier ice is disappearing at an accelerated pace threatening hundreds of coastal communities with a rise in sea levels inundating cities and a disruption of ocean cir-

culation that could forever alter the fisheries upon which the lives of millions depend for their survival.

So what does the current Administration do? It began by withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accords—the only nation among the 200 signatories to the international agreement to do so. And that was just the prelude. Attempts to stop the development of renewable clean energy sources of wind and solar have produced delays and some outright cancellations in construction, although the Administration's fig leaf arguments of hampering national security have failed to stand up in court.

Now, the legal foundation for regulating greenhouse gas emissions from the world's second most polluting country—the USA (China being number one)—has been put on the chopping block, declaring that adherence to the law is "being terminated." This proclamation will certainly receive multiple challenges in the courts and will no doubt end up with yet another Supreme Court ruling. But why should this be happening?

'Why?' Indeed! Well, how about this: since emissions from China and India are continuing to rise, why should America be the sap? [As an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* suggested (2/13/2026).] Some ethics! Or how about the belief that there is inconclusive evidence coming from some regions of the globe that rising global temperatures—which are not in dispute, unless you ask the EPA—regarding

certain consequences of global warming are playing out? The scientific facts are that the vast majority of the planet where greenhouse gas emissions are being actively monitored DO show conclusive evidence of the damage underway. That is not really the subject of a serious scientific debate. The questions are more on how extensive the damage will become, and over what time frame, if countermeasures aren't taken.

Unfortunately, the EPA, under the current rogue Administration, has decided it must bury its head in the sand and stop mandating the monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions. To paraphrase Ronald Reagan: 'There you go again!' Once more, rather than being a leader, America is becoming a pariah among responsible nations. Again in pursuit of the President's 'American Alone' (aka 'America First') agenda.

So, then, WHY? Why has the current Administration led by its Denier-In-Chief adopted such radical energy policies that are out of step with the rest of the western world? Here's a hint: Political donations to the Republican party from the oil and gas industry in 2024 amounted to $450 million! Enough said.

Lady Liberty & Immigration

Lady Liberty. Over the past quarter of a century, the world has experienced mass emigrations from countries whose failed governance has led their citizen-victims to flee in search of refuge from war, political





persecution, and poverty. During that time, we have witnessed the failure of recipient countries to peacefully and humanely absorb the flood of new immigrants, thus producing chaos at border crossings and strains in the domestic social fabrics of the affected nations.

Ultimately, political reprisals directed at this surge in global migration have become the principal accelerants driving a resurgence of xenophobic nationalism throughout the western world. It's a political disease that led to two world wars in the previous century. And it's on the rise again.

Not surprisingly, America is also facing this corrosive foil for personal grievances against ineffectual leadership and causing many to view with greater sympathy the false remedy of authoritarian rule. Congress has failed over and over again to address the problem of illegal immigration rather than acknowledging the current *status quo* and the need to for-

mulate a policy with provisions for limited amnesty, a path to citizenship, and an orderly process (however, costly) through which those wishing to enter the country may apply, to include individuals legally seeking asylum in accordance with US law.

The economic argument in favor of a steady influx of immigrant labor into the United States is strong (as it always has been). Labor shortages are showing up in various industries throughout the economy, and they will likely continue with the falling US birthrate. Self interest (and our shared history) would surely dictate that efforts be made to find a way to seamlessly and humanely welcome and integrate new immigrants into American society.

In the midst of this historic wave of world migration, Congress has repeatedly chosen to treat the problems it has created for the Untied States as too difficult to resolve, while simultaneously ignoring its opportunities. And this failure to govern has given us the current Administration which has led America to a dark place.