



Financial Crisis Report

Written and Edited by David M. Miyoshi



Advancing in a Time of Crisis

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We are experiencing the most economically unstable period and socially erratic period in the history of the modern world. This period is being marked with extreme fluctuations in the stock, commodity and currency markets accompanied by severe and sometimes violent and deadly social disruptions including historic pandemics, conflicts, wars, riots and even regime changing coups. As is typical of such times, many fortunes will be both made and lost during this period. After talking with many business owners, executives, professionals, scholars and government officials from around the world, the writer believes that for the financially astute investor, this is a time of unprecedented opportunity given the global trade imbalances and distortions in the commodity and currency markets that exists. The *Financial Crisis Report* is a free compilation of the opinions of David Miyoshi as well as of those advisors he himself subscribes to (with appropriate credits given) on how to survive and even benefit during this historic time of crisis in the world. The writer receives no compensation of any kind from any advisors whose articles or ideas may appear in this report. The reader is welcomed to check on all sources of information mentioned herein. Because the opinions and observations of this writer and other advisors are provided herein without charge, the reader is asked to make his/her own judgment on the contents.

"Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't." Mark Twain

Why Russia will not Quit the Ukraine War



Here is a direct transcript of a YouTube video aired on Feb 9, 2023 by world renowned geopolitical expert Peter Zeihan on why he believes the Ukraine War is just beginning and will eventually lead to one side or the other winning. The video explains why Russia will not stop fighting the war and why it is an existential struggle for them. I present Zeihan's transcript for your reading consideration. I hope you find it informative as I did.

D. Miyoshi

THE UKRAINE WAR IS JUST GETTING STARTED

Hello everybody. I am coming from Colorado. I thought today would be a great day to underline for everyone what's at stake with the Ukraine war and why the war to this point really is just the very beginning of what's going to be a long protracted conflict that is going to stretch well beyond Ukraine's borders. Alright, with that in your back pocket, let's launch in.



This is a map of the Russian space. In that green area is the Russian wheat belt. That is the part of Russia that is worth having where the weather is not so awful that you can't grow crops. You can't grow much, you get one crop of relatively low quality wheat because the growing season is very short, summers are very hot and dry and windy and winters are very cold and dry and windy. If you move to the right, you are in tundra and taiga, that's the blue. If you go to the left, you are in desert. So North to tundra South to desert. But what really drives the Russians to drink is the



Why Russia will not Quit the Ukraine War

beige area. The territories that even by Russian standards are useless. But they are flat and they are open and you can totally run a Mongol horde through those. So, what the Russians have always done is reached out past the green, try to expand, get buffer space, get past that beige, that area that's useless and reach a series of geographic barriers where you can't run a Panzer division through it and then forward position the relatively slow moving, relatively low-tech forces in the access points between. During the Soviet period (up to 1991) the Russians controlled all of those access points. It was the safest that the Russians have ever been. And then they lost it all. And what they been trying to do under Putin and Yeltsin in both has been to re-expand back to those footprints so that they can plug the gaps, plug the places where the invaders would come. Get static footprints, lots of troops right on the border where you can't avoid them, you can't outmaneuver them. And this is been what they've been trying to do. This is the Kazakh intervention in the Karabakh war and the Georgian war and the Donbas war and the Crimean war. This is what it's all been about.

Ukraine, unfortunately for the Ukrainians, is not one of these access points. It's on the way to the two most important ones in Romania and Poland. So, this Ukraine war was always going to happen and this was never going to be the end of it. The Russians have launched eight military expansions since 1992. This is the ninth and it wasn't going to be the last. Eventually, they would come for Poland and they would come for Romania. But we now know that the Russians are militarily incompetent at fighting a conventional war. So we know if they succeed in Ukraine, and they reach the Polish border, they know that there will be 1000 to 1 casualty ratio if they face off against NATO forces. So we know that when they do eventually come, if they make it past Ukraine, they will use every tool that they have and that includes nukes. The Russians feel that they are fighting for their existential existence and because of the demographic collapse, they are. If they fail to capture Warsaw and Northeastern Romania in the Baltz, they will shrivel in an open zone, wracked by internal disruptions and interfered with from our outside powers and over the next decade or three they will cease to exist as a functional country.

Winning here is their only option. And since it's death or winning,

every possible tool that they have will come into play and that includes the nuclear question when it becomes their only option. If the Russians win in Ukraine we will have a nuclear exchange but, if you're Ukrainian, obviously you have a different view on how this should go.



What we are looking at here is an old industrial map of industrial assets in the former Soviet system. The box there indicates approximately the Ukrainian borders and you'll notice that there's a whole cluster of these little industrial circles just beyond the Ukrainian space. Now we know if the Russians win in Ukraine where they're coming. But think about what it means if the Ukrainians win, if they succeed in ejecting Russian forces from their entire territory, the Russians aren't going to stop. Remember this is for them an existential fight for survival. They will continue doing cross-border raids until they feel they have an advantage they can make another try of it. So, the only way that Ukrainians can win and then live in peace afterwards is to disrupt logistics that prevent industrial plants in those circles from contributing to a war effort on the Ukrainian border zone. And that means the Ukrainians have to cross the border into Russia proper. Whether they do this with planes and missiles or artillery and rockets or general Army, that will be determined by the facts on the ground when this finally happens. But we are talking about deep strikes in excess of 100 to 200 miles into the Russian space to deliberately destroy industrial plant and especially connecting infrastructure. So, we know now that if the Russians win, we are going to have a nuclear crisis. And if the Ukrainians win, it's the beginning of a long slog that will take years to resolve one way or the other until either Ukraine loses the capacity to function or Russia loses the capacity to function. Russians never back down from a war without a series of mass casualty events that were so severe that





The Differences between China and the West

they've lost the ability to maintain a military position at all. They fight until they can't, especially now considering what is at stake. This is going to get a lot more intense before it gets resolved and 2022 was honestly just the warm-up and the skirmishes. The fighting in 2023 is going to be a lot more severe because Ukrainians are finally getting some real heavy equipment and tanks and the Russians are doing a second mobilization and they are going to have three quarters of a million troops in Ukraine by the end of May. The real war is only now starting.

End of Transcription

The Differences between China and the West



Here is an observant answer that recently appeared in Quora. It is a perceptive observation of the different cultural attributes of China and the West and I present it here for your reading enjoyment.

D. Miyoshi



By Dahyun Kim

Making Sense of Life & the World

On a quest to discover the truth.

Knowledgeable in:

East Asian Culture

Western Art History

Ancient Greek & Roman Literature

Digital Marketing

Lived in the following countries:

Ansan, Korea 1988–1996

So Cal, US 1996–2010

Ansan, Korea 2010–2016

Tokyo, Japan 2016–2018

Beijing, China 2018–2022

Somerset, UK 2022 – Present

What are the major differences between Chinese and Western cultures?

Having lived in China for about 4 years now and in the USA for over 14 years I think I'm well qualified to shed some light on this matter.

And since I'm neither Chinese nor a Westerner, you can be assured I won't be sugar-coating anything or favor one over the other. These are simply my observations.

The biggest difference I discovered between the two, at a fundamental level is their priorities. Chinese culture tends to prioritize the result or the end whereas Western society prioritizes the process or the means.

China is Outcome-Driven

To put it very bluntly, China cares more about money than the West. The ideal outcome that every Chinese person strives for is to have more money. Yes, money is EXTREMELY important in Chinese culture because it guarantees security for the family. They have no social safety net to fall back on. And the memories of the difficult times is still fresh in the minds of the older generations.

This is why it is extremely important in Chinese culture to have your own house and car to show people that you have wealth. You've made it. How you attain that wealth is not really important or up for discussion, as long as you reach that status or checkmark. Life is brutal and unforgiving. It is a culture where they respect power and money more than anything else.





The Differences between China and the West



Chinese are also more productive and industrious at the business level. There is less red tape or regulations to deal with so they get \$hit done. Competition is fierce because everyone is hustling to outgrow and out-compete and out-produce you. The Chinese are remarkably pragmatic and solution-oriented people.

Since Chinese culture focuses on results, people tend to be more successful in life. They are good at “obtaining” things like permits, quotas, meeting deadlines or requirements, etc.

The West is System-Driven

While China is an outcome-driven culture, the west is a system-driven one. The outcome is important, but what’s more important in western culture is the processes and the art that you use to reach that outcome.

That is why in the west it’s taboo to ask someone how much he/she makes. What’s more important is what the person does for a living.

In business, the Chinese will focus on reducing costs and increasing efficiency while Westerners, especially Europeans, will care more about how that product is made and provide valuable experiences with that product.

To illustrate this let’s look at watches. The Quartz watch was perfected by the Japanese, an eastern culture similar to the Chinese. It was revolutionary because it was more precise than mechanical watches. A perfect example of focusing on the outcome. The desired outcome of the watch is to tell the time as accurately as possible at the lowest cost. Japan delivers. However, can a Casio G-Shock watch evoke the same kind of experience and emotion as a Rolex or a Vacheron Constantin can? Probably not. Even though they are less accurate, there’s something special about these mechanical watches in how they are made and the history that a Casio can never compete with.

In western culture feelings or experiences are important while they are suppressed in eastern cultures. Westerners will say things like “how are you feeling today?” “how do you feel about bla bla bla?” etc. This is rare in China. The west has a more literary and artistic output from the west.



Living in Asia I noticed how westerners are just wired differently from East Asians. They will have tons of small talk even at work, talking about the news or some difficulties they encountered on their way to work that day, trivial affairs that are never really the topic of conversation among the Chinese. For the Chinese, they made it to work on time, there’s nothing more to say on the matter.

Since western culture focuses on the how, it is an extremely legalistic or litigious society. In the west, a company must abide by certain regulations or codes. For example, they have to follow specific animal protection laws when making leather products. So generally it’s more costly to get things done in the west. That’s why so many businesses have moved their productions to China where the regulations are lax.

Westerners also tend to be more inquisitive. Science has traditionally been a forte of western culture. And science is really about taking things apart and learning how they work, learning the processes and the mechanics. While westerners are very good at discovering new ideas, the theoretical department, the Chinese are experts at commercializing those ideas and implementing them in a practical setting.

To sum up the global economy today: The west supplies the designs, China implements those designs. Be it iPhones or Shanghai skyscrapers.



Collectivism vs Individualism





A Sign China is Softening

The second biggest difference between China and the west is that the former is a collectivist or conformist society, while the latter is an individualistic society.

China as a whole is much more unified and centralized than the west. The Chinese practice conformity to a truly remarkable extent, largely due to its Confucius and Communist past. You could be thousands of miles away in a different city in China and still expect to find the same kind of architecture, shops, signage, amenities, etc. There's both the upside and downside to this. It can be a tad boring to see the same stuff everywhere you go, but it affords a certain level of convenience. This is why I think there is a stronger sense of national identity in China.

The West is more individualistic and this is reflected in the political landscape. Europe is a fragmented continent. It is divided into many small countries which are in turn divided into many small regions and towns. And each of these regions and towns has its distinct culture, architecture, customs, and sometimes even languages.

For example, Scotland has its own separate unique identity that is different from the UK or Europe. And Scotland is a country of only about 5 million people. Many medium-sized cities in China have more people than the entire country of Scotland. The same goes for regions like Wales, Northern Ireland, Cornwall, Andalucia, Catalunya, Bavaria, Veneto, Flanders, etc.

End of Article

A Sign China is Softening

If we were to take the in vogue saying "s*** hitting the fan" and apply it to China...we would need a wind turbine and a few acres of cattle pastures.

To put it nicely, China's outlook is...grim. They're facing demographic dissolution, a dying tech industry and a risk exposed energy sector, and we're barely scratching the surface. They are the single-most internationally exposed country in our collapsing world.

So how does a country like that continue on? The short answer is CHANGE and perhaps a little collaboration with the USA. To that tune, President Xi may have just given us a sign that he gets it.

Here is a direct transcript of Peter Zeihan's YouTube video on Jan 10, 2023 about a recent change that indicates China is now softening.

D. Miyoshi

Changing Tides in the Chinese System



Jan 10, 2023

Peter Zeihan here from my parent's backyard in Marshall Town Iowa.

Today we are going to talk about some of the things that are in motion apparently in the Chinese system.

Now for those of you who have been following me for a while you know that I am not very bullish on China. It's facing not demographic collapse, it's far faster than that. Just a complete demographic dissolution and economic collapse that goes along with that within the decade, assuming that there no other problems.

The United States has put in a series of technological restrictions that basically kill the entire Chinese tech sector. The Chinese energy sectors are completely dependent upon the ability to access the Middle East which is an area they can't reach in force. Their trade system and their economic structures and their employment structures are utterly dependent upon the U.S. Navy making it safe for their civilian vessels to hit the world over. They are arguably the most internationally exposed country in the world and on top of that their financial sector and their agricultural sectors are absolute messes, things that make Enron look really well-run. This is a country that is not going to last a whole lot longer.

And in that environment, the question is how do the Chinese prepare for the economy, and if they want to politically continue, to this





Comparing Standards of Living for Retiring in Other Countries

point their solution has been absolutely rampant rabid foaming at the mouth nationalism, convincing their people that it doesn't matter if you can feed your kids, it doesn't matter if you have your job, you are Han Chinese and Chairman Xi is your leader and that's enough. And to that end, Chinese propaganda has gone from the aggressive to the absolutely hateful.

The person who has probably played the biggest role from an international point of view in this is a guy by the name Zhao Lijian who has been the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And he is kind of the poster child for what the Chinese call warrior wolf diplomacy which is an unapologetic, ultranationalist, very hate and invective filled approach to dealing with the rest of the world. So this is the guy who has popularized art that shows Australian soldiers with their knees on Third World children. This is the guy who insists that Covid started at Fort Dietrich in the United States and was then spread to the world as a way to wipe out nonwhite people that sort of thing. He's a real piece of work and a general "asshat."

Anyway, as long as he was at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was the voice of China on the international stage. Well..... on the first week of January, he was transferred very quietly away from the MFA and he is now a small wig at the Department of Ocean and Boundary Affairs which is about like getting taken from being the spokesman of God and all of a sudden now you are responsible for.....Oh, what would be a great example you're in charge of border patrol in northern Idaho. It's difficult to imagine someone falling so far, so fast.

Now the challenge we have in interpreting this is that no one really knows what Xi is thinking because Xi is in such a tight cult of personality that he doesn't really confide in anyone and it is very difficult for Intel to penetrate that sort of environment. But we know that Zhao was one of Xi's favorites and so for Zhao to be, not just demoted, but put into a complete cubby hole in the middle of nowhere in terms of bureaucracy, is an indication that Xi knows that this strategy has utterly failed. There is no version of China that survives this unless it finds a way to work with the United States in a constructive way and one that basically gives the United States every-

thing from a strategic point of view that it wants.

The United States is the only country that even theoretically has the tools that could help China survive what is coming. And having somebody whose job it is to throw gravel into the gears of the diplomatic relationship obviously is not helping at all. But to have him so dramatically demoted indicates that perhaps, just perhaps, just maybe, kinda, sorta, Xi is realizing that the end is approaching and he really needs to change diplomatic gears if there is any hope for China surviving the rest of this decade. So it's very perspective at this point, but if there was one person who needed to move in order to make a new approach happen, it was Zhao and now he is gone.

Okay, that's it for me, until next time.

[End of video transcription](#)

Comparing Standards of Living for Retiring in Other Countries



The general definition of standard of living is the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities available to a certain socioeconomic class or geographic area. This concept is different from quality of life which is a subjective term that refers more to a measure of happiness, which is a totally different thing.

Harry Dent, is a noted financial author and New York Times Best-seller, a Harvard Business School Baker Scholar and former Baines Capital manager. Dent is the president and founder of the Dent Research and director of H.S. Dent Publishing.

Dent writes and markets an economic newsletter that reviews the economy in the US and around the world by focusing on generation-





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al consumer spending patterns, as well as financial markets. He has written eleven books, two recent ones being New York Times best-sellers. His most recent book, *The Sale of a Lifetime*, was released in September 2016.

Dent is known for his investment thesis which features the spending wave theory that consumer spending is related to the generational formation of families and has a profound effect on the market value of investments such as financial securities, real estate, and gold. Dent's spending wave theory posits that young adults spend little within the greater economy, and spending increases while they rear children. It peaks as children leave home and then slows during the last 15 years of working life (48–63). According to Dent, the decreased spending patterns of the current generation of US baby boomers entering retirement will cause a pronounced downturn in the greater macroeconomy and an associated decline in the value of financial markets.

On January 11, 2023 Dent published his list of the Richest Major Countries in the World, ranked according to standard of living. For those thinking of retiring in Singapore, this list portends good things while not so much for those planning to retire in China (which does not seem very realistic at this time anyway). If you were thinking of retiring in a foreign country, this list may give you some food for thought.

D. Miyoshi



Retirement Planning: Richest Major Countries in the World

I think it is always useful to know where the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico (in my case), or your country ranks in standard of living, and not just in U.S. dollars. Adjusting for the cost of living gives the most accurate picture.

A lot of us are older and moving into or through retirement. That's when you have more options to move and to choose somewhere different to live, if you are no longer tied to a job in your home country.

In 2016, I up and moved to Puerto Rico, and it was not primarily for the incredible tax savings. I discovered Culebra (one of two Virgin Islands off of Puerto Rico) in 1993 and built a vacation home there. I needed to move there to finish the damn thing (a story for another

day) on an island of 1,900 people with scarce skills... It's mostly retirees and young adventurers. One of the big advantages was the much-lower cost of housing, so low that I bought when I was advising most people not to buy in most parts of the U.S. and around the world.

Here is a ranking of 21 developed countries by GDP per capita, adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP) in what they term international dollars. It's not a perfect measure, but it's the best one out there internationally.

22 Major Countries: GDP Per Capita Purchasing Power-Adjusted (PPP)

Country Name	2021 GDP PPP
Singapore*	\$116,486
Norway	\$79,201
Switzerland	\$77,274
United Arab Emirates	\$76,609
United States*	\$69,288
Hong Kong SAR, China	\$65,982
Netherlands	\$63,768
Sweden	\$59,324
Belgium	\$58,905
Austria	\$58,431
Germany	\$57,881
Australia*	\$56,281
Canada*	\$52,985
France	\$50,541
United Kingdom*	\$49,675
Saudi Arabia	\$48,711
Korea, Rep.	\$47,243
Israel*	\$43,722
Japan	\$42,940
Spain	\$40,699
Puerto Rico	\$35,850
China	\$19,338

*English Speaking

Source: <https://www.hsdent.com>

www.hsdent.com

It was no surprise to me that Singapore was No. 1, and that is true even with regard to GDP in U.S. dollars. Singapore is one large and up-and-coming global city... no rural residents with lower incomes. And it is more affluent by far, at \$116,486 GDP per capita in PPP. The next is Norway at No. 2, with its valuable oil reserves. Number 3, Switzerland, has always been a haven for the wealthy. And the UAE benefits the most broadly from its oil reserves.

The good news is that the U.S. is the only really large country that ranks high, at No. 5. China, India, Indonesia, and Russia don't come close to ranking in these top echelons. I have shown China at the bottom, at \$19,338, for comparison, even though it was until recently a third-world country and only even more recently has become a second-world one.

For most of our subscribers, the English-speaking countries marked with an asterisk will tend to be the most attractive. Australia would be my first choice, Canada second, and the U.K. third. English-speaking New Zealand, the most remote and with a population of five million, is not listed here, but it comes in at \$48,781 GDP per capita in PPP.

So, to where do you want to retire?

End of Article





Is there a Plan to Carve Up Russia?

In the midst of the Ukraine War some intelligence commentators and pundits have asked the “Is there a Plan to Carve Up Russia?”

That question was answered in an article by Mike Whitney in

LewRockwell.com

anti-state • anti-war • pro-market

While Russia is fighting an existential threat to its existence (see the first article in this newsletter), its counterparts led by the US, are already thinking of how to divey it up. I present the LewRockwell article here for your reading consideration.

D. Miyoshi

The Plan to Carve Up Russia

By Mike Whitney

The Unz Review

January 14, 2023



“For decades, the idea of dismantling the Soviet Union and Russia has been constantly cultivated in Western countries. Unfortunately, at some point, the idea of using Ukraine to achieve this goal was conceived. In fact, to prevent such a development, we launched the special military operation (SMO). This is precisely what some western countries –led by the United States– strive

for; to create an anti-Russian enclave and then threaten us from this direction. Preventing this from happening is our primary goal.” Vladimir Putin

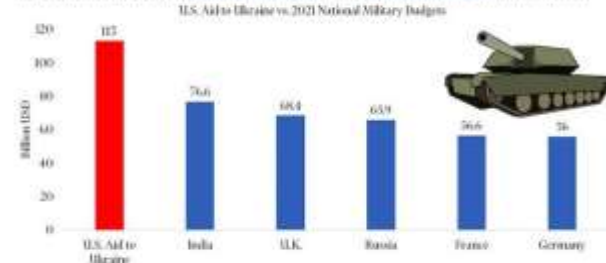
Here’s your geopolitical quiz for the day: What did Angela Merkel mean when she said “that the Cold War never really ended, because ultimately Russia was never pacified”?

1. Merkel was referring to the fact that Russia has never accepted its subordinate role in the “Rules-based Order.”
2. Merkel was referring to the fact that Russia’s economic collapse did not produce the ‘compliant state’ western elites had hoped for.
3. Merkel is suggesting that the Cold War was never really a struggle between democracy and communism, but a 45 year-long effort to “pacify” Russia.
4. What Merkel meant was that the western states –particularly the United States– do not want a strong, prosperous and independent Russia but a servile lackey that does as it is told.
5. All of the above.

If you chose (5), then pat yourself on the back. That is the right answer.

U.S. Aid to Ukraine vs. National Military Budgets

The Biden Administration has spent more on aid to Ukraine than the entire military budgets of India and Russia.



Last week, Angela Merkel confirmed what many analysts have been saying for years, that Washington’s hostile relations with Russia –which date back more than a century– have nothing to do with ideology, ‘bad behavior’ or alleged “unprovoked aggression”. **Russia’s primary offense is that it occupies a strategic area of the world that contains vast natural resources and which is critical to Washington’s “pivot to Asia” plan.** Russia’s real crime is that its mere existence poses a threat to the globalist project to spread US military bases across Central Asia, encircle China, and become the regional hegemon in the world’s most prosperous and populous region.

So much attention has been focused on what Merkel said regarding the Minsk Treaty, that her more alarming remarks have been entirely ignored. Here is a short excerpt from a recent interview Merkel gave to an Italian magazine:

The 2014 Minsk Accords were an attempt to give Ukraine time.





Is there a Plan to Carve Up Russia?

Ukraine used this period to become stronger, as seen today. The country of 2014/15 is not the country of today....

We all knew that it was a frozen conflict, that the problem was not solved, but this was precisely what gave Ukraine precious time.” (“Angela Merkel: Kohl took advantage of his voice and build”, Corrier Della Sera)

Merkel candidly admits that she participated in a 7 year-long fraud that was aimed at deceiving the Russian leadership into thinking that she genuinely wanted peace, but that proved not to be the case. In truth, **the western powers deliberately sabotaged the treaty in order to buy-time to arm and train a Ukrainian army that would be used in a war against Russia.**

But this is old news. What we find more interesting is what Merkel said following her comments on Minsk. Here’s the money-quote:

I want to talk to you about an aspect that makes me think. It’s the fact that **the Cold War never really ended, because ultimately Russia was never pacified.** When Putin invaded Crimea in 2014, he was excluded from the G8. In addition, NATO has deployed troops in the Baltic region, to demonstrate its readiness to intervene. And we too have decided to allocate 2% of GDP to military expenditure for defence. CDU and CSU were the only ones to have kept it in the government programme. But we too should have reacted more quickly to Russia’s aggressiveness. (“Angela Merkel: Kohl took advantage of his voice and build”, Corrier Della Sera)

This is an astonishing admission. What **Merkel is saying is that “the Cold War never ended” because the primary goal of weakening (“pacifying”) Russia –to the point that it could not defend its own vital interests or project power beyond its borders– was not achieved.** Merkel is implying that the main objective of the Cold War was not to defeat communism (as we were told) but to create a compliant Russian colony that would allow the globalist project to go forward unimpeded. As we can see in Ukraine, that objective has not been achieved; and the reason it hasn’t been achieved is because Russia is powerful enough to block NATO’s eastward expansion. In short, **Russia has become the greatest-single obstacle to the globalist strategy for world domination.**

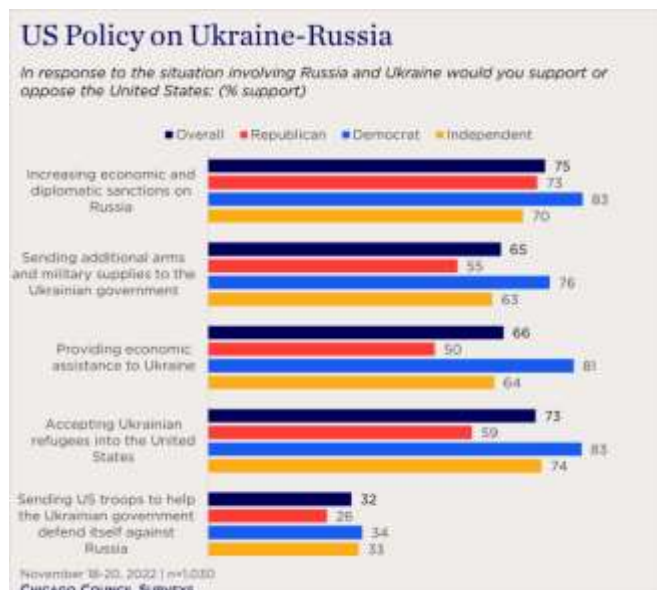
It’s worth noting, that Merkel never mentions Russia’s alleged “unprovoked aggression” in Ukraine as the main problem. In fact, she makes no attempt to defend that spurious claim. The real problem according to Merkel is that Russia has not been ‘pacified’. Think about that. This suggests that the justification for the war is different than the one that is promoted by the media. What it **implies is that the conflict is driven by geopolitical objectives that have been concealed behind the “invasion” smokescreen.** Merkel’s comments clear the air in that regard, by identifying the real goal; pacification.

In a minute we will show that the war was triggered by “geopolitical objectives” and not Russia’s alleged “aggression”, but first we need to review the ideas that are fueling the drive to war. The main body of principles upon which America’s foreign policy rests, is the Wolfowitz Doctrine, the first draft of which was presented in the Defense Planning Guidance in 1992. Here’s a short excerpt:

Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere, that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power.

There it is in black and white: **The top priority of US foreign policy** “is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere, that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union.” This shows the importance that Washington and its allies place on the territory occupied by the Russian Federation. It also shows the determination of western leaders to prevent any sovereign state from controlling the area the US needs to implement its grand strategy.

It doesn’t take a genius to figure out that Russia’s transformation into a strong and independent state has not only put it squarely in Washington’s crosshairs, but also greatly increased the chances



Global Affairs.org



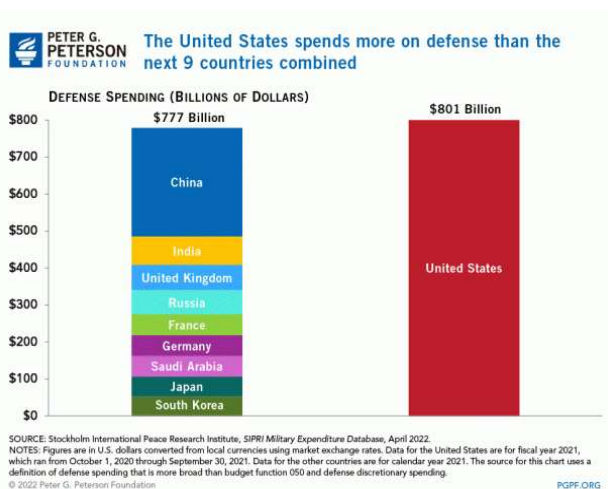


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of a direct confrontation. Simply put, Russia's return to the ranks of the great powers has placed it on Washington's 'enemies list' and a logical target for US aggression.

So, what does this have to do with Merkel?

Implicit in Merkel's comments is the fact that the dissolution of the communist state and the collapse of the Russian economy was not sufficient to leave Russia "pacified". She is, in fact, voicing her support for more extreme measures. And she knows what those measures will be; regime change followed by a violent splintering of the country.



Putin is well-aware of this malignant plan and has discussed it openly on many occasions. Take a look at this 2-minute video of a meeting Putin headed just weeks ago:

“The goal of our enemies is to weaken and break up our country. This has been the case for centuries.. They believe our country is too big and poses a threat (to them), which is why it must be weakened and divided. For our part, we always pursued a different approach; we always wanted to be a part of the so-called ‘civilized (western) world.’ And after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we thought we would finally become a part of that ‘world’. But, as it turned out, we weren’t welcome despite all our efforts. Our attempts to become a part of that world were rejected. Instead, they did everything they could— including assisting terrorists in the Caucasus— to finish off Russia and break-up the Russian Federation.” Vladimir Putin

The point we're making is that Merkel's views align seamlessly with those of the neocons. They also align with the those of the entire western political establishment that has unanimously thrown its support behind a confrontation with Russia. Additionally, the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Strategy and the Congressional Research Service's latest report, have

all shifted their focus from the war against international terrorism to a “great power competition” with Russia and China. **Not surprisingly, the documents have little to do with ‘competition’, rather, they provide an ideological justification for hostilities with Russia.** In other words, the United States has laid the groundwork for a direct confrontation with the world's biggest nuclear superpower.

Check out this brief clip from the Congressional Research Service Report titled Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress:

The U.S. goal of preventing the emergence of regional hegemony in Eurasia... is a policy choice reflecting two judgments: (1) **that given the amount of people, resources, and economic activity in Eurasia, a regional hegemon in Eurasia would represent a concentration of power large enough to be able to threaten vital U.S. interests;** and (2) **that Eurasia is not dependably self-regulating in terms of preventing the emergence of regional hegemony, meaning that the countries of Eurasia cannot be counted on to be able to prevent, though their own actions, the emergence of regional hegemony, and may need assistance from one or more countries outside Eurasia to be able to do this dependably.”**....

From a U.S. perspective on grand strategy and geopolitics, it can be noted that most of the world's people, resources, and economic activity are located not in the Western Hemisphere, but in the other hemisphere, particularly Eurasia. In response to this basic feature of world geography, U.S. policymakers for the last several decades have chosen to pursue, as a key element of U.S. national strategy, a goal of preventing the emergence of regional hegemony in Eurasia.

Although U.S. policymakers do not often state explicitly in public the goal of preventing the emergence of regional hegemony in Eurasia, U.S. military operations in recent decades—both war-time operations and day-to-day operations—appear to have been carried out in no small part in support of this goal.” (**“Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress”**, US Congress)

It sounds a lot like the Wolfowitz Doctrine, doesn't it? (Which suggests that Congress has moved into the neocon camp.)





Is there a Plan to Carve Up Russia?



The Big Serge Annexation Map

There are a few things worth considering in this short excerpt:

1. That “the U.S. goal of preventing the emergence of regional hegemony in Eurasia” has nothing to do with national defense. It is a straightforward declaration of war on any nation that successfully uses the free market to grow its economy. It is particularly unsettling that China is on Washington’s target-list when US corporate outsourcing and offshoring have factored so large in China’s success. US industries moved their businesses to China to avoid paying anything above a slave wage. Is China to be blamed for that?
2. The fact that Eurasia has more “people, resources, and economic activity” than America, does not constitute a “threat” to US national security. It only represents a threat to the ambitions of western elites who want to use the US Military to pursue their own geopolitical agenda.

Finally: Notice how the author acknowledges that the government deliberately misleads the public about its real objectives in Central Asia. He says: “U.S. policymakers do not often state explicitly in public the goal of preventing the emergence of regional hegemony in Eurasia, U.S. military operations in recent decades—both wartime operations and day-to-day operations—appear to have been carried out in no small part in support of this goal.” **In other words, all the claptrap about “freedom and democracy” is just plabum for the masses. The real goals are “resources, economic activity” and power.**

The National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy are equally explicit in identifying Russia as a de facto enemy of the United States. This is from the NSS:

Russia poses an immediate and ongoing threat to the regional security order in Europe and it is a source of disruption and instability globally...

Russia now poses an immediate and persistent threat to international peace and stability....

Russia poses an immediate threat to the free and open international system, recklessly flouting the basic laws of the in-

ternational order ... This decade will be decisive, in setting the terms of ...managing the acute threat posed by Russia.. (“The 2022 National Security Strategy”, White House)

And lastly, The 2022 National Defense Strategy reiterates the same themes as the others; Russia and China pose an unprecedented threat to the “rules-based order”. Here’s short summary from an article at the World Socialist Web Site:

The 2022 National Defense Strategy... makes clear that the United States sees the subjugation of Russia as a critical stepping stone toward the conflict with China.... The eruption of American imperialism... is more and more directly targeting Russia and China, which the United States sees as **the principal obstacles to the untrammelled domination of the world.** US strategists have long regarded the domination of the Eurasian landmass, with its vast natural resources, as the key to global domination.” (“Pentagon national strategy document targets China”, Andres Damon, World Socialist Web Site)

What these three strategic documents show is that the Washington BrainTrust had been preparing the ideological foundation for a war with Russia long before the first shot was ever fired in Ukraine. That war is now underway although the outcome is far from certain.

The strategy going forward appears to be a version of the Cheney Plan which recommended a break up of Russia itself, “so it could never again be a threat to the rest of the world.” Here’s more from an article by Ben Norton:

“Former US Vice President Dick Cheney, a lead architect of the Iraq War, not only wanted to dismantle the Soviet Union; he also wanted to break up Russia itself, to prevent it from rising again as a significant political power... The fact that a figure at the helm of the US government not-so-secretly sought the permanent dissolution of Russia as a country, and straightforwardly communicated this to colleagues like Robert Gates, partially explains the aggressive posturing Washington has taken toward the Russian Federation since the overthrow of the USSR.

The reality is that **the US empire will simply never allow Russia to challenge its unilateral domination of Eurasia,** despite the fact that the government in Moscow restored capitalism. This is why it is not surprising that Washington has utterly ignored Russia’s security concerns, breaking its promise not to expand NATO “one inch eastward” after German reunification, surrounding Moscow with militarized adversaries hell bent on destabilizing it.” (“Ex VP Dick Cheney confirmed US goal is to break up Russia, not just USSR”, Ben Norton, Multipolarista)

The carving up of Russia into several smaller statelets, has long been the dream of the neoconservatives. The difference now, is





The Futures of the Six Largest Populated Countries

that that same dream is shared by political leaders across the West. Recent comments by Angela Merkel underscore the fact that western leaders are now committed to achieving the unrealized goals of the Cold War. They intend to use military confrontation to affect the political outcome they seek which is a significantly weakened Russia incapable of blocking Washington's projection of power across Central Asia. A more dangerous strategy would be hard to imagine.

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The Futures of the Six Largest Populated Countries



Here are the findings from a recent article by Harry Dent, noted New York Time best-selling author (and one of America's most respected financial consultant who developed a unique population based system to forecast the economic futures of countries), on the near futures of the six most populated countries in the world.

The chart below from that article provides a great summary of what is in store for the world economically. It shows the populations of the six largest countries in the world and the population trends of each out to the year 2100. Dent has been fighting the perception of many that China is going to become the number one country in the world, soon surpassing the U.S., and is going to stay there for a long time. Dent says that is not going to happen for China, although it likely will happen for India, albeit sometime closer to 2065 when India's population finally peaks, as the chart below shows.

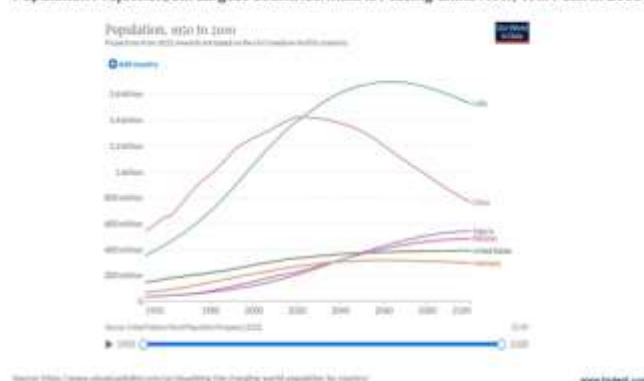
And why is that? Dent explains as China gets more affluent, it is following the demographic pattern of Japan. The population of China is peaking now, and massive falls in population over the course of

the rest of this century will take China from 1.43B people today to around 770M by 2100. The Spending Wave for China looks to have peaked already, back around 2011, and China is the first emerging country where this has happened. Others will follow eventually, as all developed countries have peaked in their Spending Waves, starting with Japan way back in 1996.

Dent also looks at the Spending Waves for major countries and when they peak, which is even more important to the economy of each. And the Spending Waves likewise show that India very likely ultimately will be the number one country in the world, surpassing first China and then the U.S, but that will be decades from now. The chart gives a broader, simpler view of total population for the six largest countries, found in North America, East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Africa...

And among them, China has the worst trajectory by far!

Population Projection, Six Largest Countries: India is Passing China Now, Will Peak in 2065



The population of China likely is peaking literally this year, after rising by 480,000 in 2021 and then, in 2022, falling slightly from 1.413B to 1.412B, its first drop since the early 1960s. The population of India will continue to grow and will peak around 2065, about a decade after its Spending Wave peaks around 2055. The U.S. population will plateau at around 380M after the year 2040 (from 338M today), but only if immigration rates continue to be healthy.

Nigeria, the largest country in Africa, will continue to grow into 2100, as will Pakistan, which is the second-largest country in South Asia after India and borders India. Indonesia will peak around 2045 and then fade very slowly.

Dent explains the big picture here is simple. The U.S. will hold up remarkably well as a mature, fully urban country, as a result of high immigration, if that continues. Europe is already starting to shrink from the south and east toward the north and has no countries in this top six. Much as has already happened in Japan, the population of China is going to fall like a rock, as China is aging rapidly and very few are immigrating there. India will be the largest country that continues to grow and will drive the world economy into 2055–2065 in the boom that will follow after the up-and-coming boom in the U.S.





AI at McDonalds

and globally from around 2025 to 2037, during which the Millennial generation will take the U.S. back to economic levels similar to those of the Baby Boomers in their Spending Wave but not significantly higher. In other words, the U.S. will go more sideways as opposed to the countries of Europe, which actually will fall.

Pakistan and Nigeria will be the new rising stars as time moves forward, but it will take longer for each to get its GDP per capita up to modest levels. Neither country is likely to surpass India or China in affluence, and neither ever will get anywhere near the U.S. in affluence or India in total GDP.

For global investments, the best opportunities increasingly will be in Indonesia and other areas of Southeast Asia, India and Pakistan in South Asia, and then Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa, in that order. The boom from 2025 to 2037 will focus mostly on Southeast Asia and on India in South Asia, which is likely to become the “next China,” urbanizing rapidly... and filling the great void that China will leave after being the largest driving force of the global boom since the early 1980s.

As the next few years progress, we will get to see more clearly how accurate Dent's forecast is. I have a feeling his forecast will be quite accurate.

D. Miyoshi

AI at McDonalds



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the ability of a digital computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings.

Tasks can be anything including taking orders, flipping burgers and serving the food in bags. That's exactly what is now being done at a McDonalds restaurant outside of Fort Worth Texas.

On Jan 20, 2023, the magazine *Exponential Tech Investor* published the following report:

McDonald's Just Opened an AI-Powered Restaurant

Automation is all around us. It's popping up everywhere, from our shopping malls and grocery stores to the fast-food industry. But especially in fast food.

Fast-food giants are rapidly turning toward automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence (AI) as crucial pieces of the industry's future.

Recently, McDonald's opened up its first fully automated restaurant. The automated location is open for business just outside of Fort Worth, Texas.

Inside the store, there are screens and conveyor belts instead of burger-flipping employees. The store requires far less human labor, and the job has changed. Instead of food production, the work is better – and that of robotic and automation systems maintenance.

Think about that for a moment.

Instead of a fry cook flipping burgers, we have a robot full of sensors ensuring food is cooked to perfection. Instead of a worker handing us our kid's Happy Meal, there's a conveyor belt delivering it at the window.

We can see this below:

McDonald's Conveyor Belt Drive-Thru Window



More importantly, instead of a real person taking our order at the drive-thru window, an AI processes our order.

And this AI is just like the ones our Exponential Tech Investor holding Presto (PRST) is installing at drive-thru locations across the country.

We're moving into uncharted territory here. The world is turning toward more and more automation as labor force participation continues to decline and people leave the workforce.

Automation is a matter of necessity due to the labor shortage. And reducing operational costs is critical due to the impact of inflation.

This trend has been heating up even more over the last 12 months.

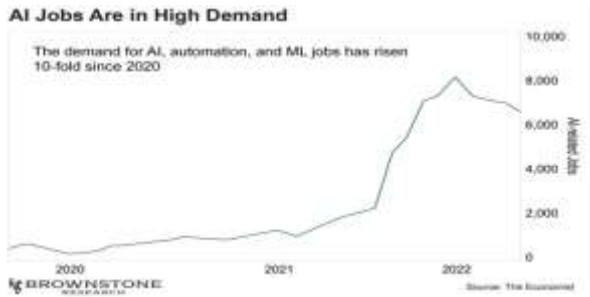




Losing Masculinity

Companies in the S&P 500 acquired 52 AI start-ups in 2022, compared to 24 in 2017. And venture capitalists invested over \$67 billion into AI firms in 2022, according to PitchBook.

AI firms are also hiring more than ever before. In the three months leading up to November, over 7,000 job ads for AI and machine learning (ML) experts popped up every month from S&P 500 companies.



As we can see, this space is booming – and about to go mainstream. And right now, we're standing at the very beginning of what will become the future of not just fast food, but much of the heavily strained restaurant industry.

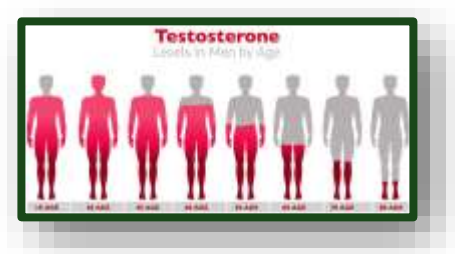
We've entered a new era of automation. That's why I look at holdings like Presto as an integral part of the transformation and automation of business.

In fact, it won't be long before it will become a severe competitive disadvantage for companies not using AI and automation. These are technologies that will transform the landscape of both business and the employment marketplace.

"The world is a changin"

D. Miyoshi

Losing Masculinity



What drives the physical engine of a man? The fundamental biological differences between male and female in size, strength, energy, stamina, thought and behavior is determined largely by a powerful hormone called testosterone.

The bodies of males make 10 to 20 times more testosterone than females. A slow drop in testosterone is a normal part of aging, sometimes called "andropause" or "male menopause." Apart from this, something else has been happening over the last 100 years.

To answer that I present the report below by Jorg Mardian published on Jan 22, 2023. I think you will find it informative.

D. Miyoshi



Men have less testosterone today, and the decline seems to be precipitous. A Danish study showed that men born in the 1920s had 14 percent more testosterone than men born in the 1960s. *Healthy Cells* reported that men born in the 1910s still had more testosterone at age 70 than men born in the 1940s had at age 55. *American Greatness* reports that the average 22-year-old today has the virility that 67-year-old men had in 2000. In the 2020s, young men have about 27 percent less testosterone than their predecessors.

Over the 20th century, men (and women) have changed their diets substantially, consuming unhealthy foods filled with chemicals, including synthetic estrogens such as DDT, BPA and agricultural poisons.

Endocrine disruptors can dramatically affect the hormonal pathway, causing imbalances, destroying cells and shutting off testosterone production. In fact, some are so potent that in certain doses, they can all but turn male animals into females.

As nutritionists and government officials also spread the flawed idea that dietary fat causes elevated cholesterol levels, more men have tried low-fat diets, which decrease their testosterone levels by 10 to 15 percent (*News Medical Life Sciences*). Meanwhile, many take statins to lower blood cholesterol levels, and cholesterol is the building block of testosterone.

Burning the midnight oil is another damaging habit, states a 2011 JAMA study. The testosterone of a man who gets only 5.5 hours or less of sleep each night for eight nights or more drops by an average of 10 to 15 percent. The deep stages of sleep help restore hormone and other function, but diet, digitalization and other factors are causing lack of sleep and restlessness at night.

Pharmaceutical drugs are also detrimental to about 66 percent of





How to Destroy America

Americans taking them. Many drugs bind to the bodily protein serum albumin, competing with testosterone for transport and lowering its overall levels.

There are likely more causes, but as an October 2022 *Telegraph* article states, our modern lifestyle is increasing every form of acute, chronic physical and mental illness, associated with lower testosterone levels in men.

A drop in testosterone levels to below 300 ng/dl, a condition known medically as hypogonadism, can dim the fire inside a middle-aged man. But instead of enacting lifestyle changes, many turn to testosterone replacement prescriptions as the easier choice, where doctors typically give injections, skin gels or patches that boost energy, libido and increased muscle size.

But legitimate safety concerns exist; the United States Food and Drug Administration asking drug makers in 2015 to add warning labels of increased heart attack and stroke risk to testosterone replacement therapy products. Other risks include male breast cancer, blood cancer, enlarged prostate and obstructive sleep apnea, according to *Harvard Health*.

In simple terms, testosterone is a chemical vehicle that travels through the body, delivering messages to cause changes necessary for proper function. Yet males today are told it's a toxin causing elevated aggression and bigotry. If you listen to the foolishness, it's as if proper education, thought and behavior have become secondary to male hormonal rages, fueling a national debate over male masculinity and ultimately America's identity (Forbes.com).

Millennial men, already greatly neutered in male hormones, report feeling pressured to project a traditional image of manhood. A YouGov survey asked men to rate themselves on a scale of "completely masculine" to "completely feminine." Only 30 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds chose "completely masculine." That's compared to 65 percent of men over 65.

Men have relinquished their masculine perspectives and duties, leaving many effeminate, weak and dysfunctional. Some go so far as to mimic women, even to the point of mutilating their bodies.

This devaluation of the modern masculine man is bad news for society. What men need is a positive change, and the secret is a healthy lifestyle.

Exercise is a great antidote, but type and intensity of effort is the key. Testosterone reacts to bodily stress as a protective mechanism against activity loads. Intense and consistent effort with exercises that stress multiple muscle groups are particularly effective, notably high-intensity endurance (weight or cardio) and resistance training (tctmed.com).

Exercise, coupled with intermittent fasting, can increase testosterone

by 400 percent. One approach is to eat at noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., then nothing until noon the next day. This allows your organs, especially your liver, to rest and balance hormones.

To increase this important part of your health, clean up your diet, eat lots of healthy fats, get daily sunshine, plenty of sleep and minimize stress. In other words, follow a lifestyle that's conducive to good health and your natural testosterone levels should stay topped up for a lifetime.

End of Article

How to Destroy America



Any nation looking to collapse the United States economy would need massive resources to destabilize the world's strongest and most dependable currency, a robust and regularly growing economy, and the foundation of a large percentage of the global economy. Obviously, no nation which could possibly benefit has remotely close to the wealth and means to do so.

Any nation looking to engineer warfare would be going against by far the strongest military on Earth, as well as most of the world's top 20 strongest militaries. (*Quite ludicrous*).

Any nation looking to use some sort of biological/chemical vector would need to create an unprecedented research program in size, scope and effectiveness, creating both the means and the nationwide delivery system, and do so without anyone noticing their actions at any step. Not really possible.

Any nation looking to foment internal collapse needs to contend with the fact no stable, egalitarian, wealthy, fully enfranchised nation has ever fallen into civil war. Not even really close. There is strong evidence that wealth, health, safety and access to cable television are all civil war deterrents. The amount of resources needed to counter these barriers are far beyond any nation's means, especially in secret.

So barring some massive, unpredictable, and unprecedented natural disaster doing the dirty work (I'm talking once in an epoch level) it





How to Destroy America

would be near impossible for any nation at this time (or in the near and foreseeable future) to engineer ruin and disaster on the United States short of Mutually Assured Destruction by nuclear means. It is simply too large, too politically/economically stable, and too globally connected to make such prospects realistic outside the pen of a science fiction author.

But if one wanted to do it from within, then it would be much easier.

Let's take a look at how it can be done. Here is a recent article by one of America's foremost conservative intellectuals, Victor Davis Hanson, who is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

I think you will find it quite illuminating.

D. Miyoshi

How to destroy the United States

by Victor Davis Hanson December 5, 2022

If you really want to destroy the United States:

1. Surrender our prior energy independence.

Reduce new gas and oil leases on federal lands to the lowest levels of any president in history. Cut back production at precisely the time the world is emerging from a two-year lockdown with pent-up consumer demand.

Make war on coal and nuclear power. Drain the strategic petroleum reserve to make the pain for consumers more bearable for midterm election advantage.

Cancel the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge oil and gas field. Block pipelines like the Keystone oil pipeline and the Constitution natural gas line.

Over-regulate and demonize frackers and horizontal drillers. Ensure there is less investment for their exploration and production.

Make use of internal combustible engines or fossil fuel power generation prohibitively expensive. Achieve a green oil-dependency along the lines of contemporary Europe.

2. Print trillions of dollars in new currency as the lockdowns end, demand rises, and consumers are already saturated with Covid-19 subsidies. Keep interest rates low, well below the rate of inflation, as

you print more money. Ensure that passbook holders earn no interest at the very time prices skyrocket to the highest per annum level in 40 years.

"Spread the wealth" by sending money to those who already have enough, while making it less valuable for those deemed to have too much. Ensure runaway high prices to wean the middle class off its consumerism and supposedly to inspire them to buy less junk they don't need. Damn the rich in the open and in the abstract, court them in the concrete and secret of darkness.

3. End America's physical boundaries. Render it an amorphous people and anywhere space. End any vestigial difference between a citizen and resident. Up the current nearly 50 million who were not born in the United States--27 percent of California's population--to 100 million and more by allowing 3 million illegal aliens to enter per year.

4. Destroy the public trust in its elections. Render Election Day irrelevant. Make proper auditing of 110 million mail-in/early ballots impossible. Normalize ballot harvesting and curing.

Blast as "election denialists," "insurrectionists," and "democracy destroyers" anyone who objects to these radical ballot changes, neither passed by the U.S. Congress nor by state legislators. Weaponize the FBI, CIA, and Department of Justice.

5. Redefine crime as one rich man's crime, another poor man's necessity.

Let those who need things exercise their entitlement to them. Rewrite or ignore laws to exempt the oppressed who take, or do what they want as atonement for past systemic racism and oppression.

6. Junk the ossified idea of a melting pot and multiracial society united by common American values and ideals. Instead, identify individuals by their superficial appearance. Call anyone a "racist" who resists.

Encourage each tribe, defined by common race, ethnic, gender, or sexual orientation affinities, to band together to oppose the monolithic "white privilege" majority. Encourage social and tribal tensions. Racially discriminate to end discrimination.

Greenlight statue toppling, name changing, boycotting, cancel culturing, ostracizing, and Trotskyizing. Erase the past, control the present, and create a new American person for the future.

7. Render the United States just one of many nations abroad. Abandon Afghanistan in shame. Leave behind thousands of loyal Afghan allies, billions of dollars in equipment, a billion-dollar embassy, and the largest air base in central Asia. Appease the theocracy to re-enter the Iran nuclear deal.





Japan's Big Gender Problem

Beg enemies like Venezuela, Russia, and Iran to pump more oil when it is politically expedient for us to have abundant supplies--oil that we have in abundance but won't produce. Discourage friends like Guinea from producing more energy and cancel allies' energy projects like the EastMed pipeline.

Trash, but then beg Saudi Arabia to pump more oil right before the midterms for domestic political advantage.

8. Neuter the First Amendment. Enlist Silicon Valley monopolies to silence unwanted free speech while using Big Tech's mega profits to warp elections. Declare free expression "hate speech." Criminalize contrarian social media.

9. Demonize half the country as semi-fascists, un-Americans, insurrectionists, and even potential domestic terrorists. Try to change inconvenient ancient rules: seek to pack the court, end the filibuster, junk the Electoral College, and bring in two more states.

Twice impeach a president who tried to stand in your way. Try him when he is an emeritus president and private citizen. Raid his home. Seek to indict a future rival to the current president.

10. Never mention the origins of the Covid-19 virus. Never blame China for the release of SARS-CoV-2 virus. Exempt investigations of U.S. health officials who subsidized Chinese gain-of-function research. Ignore the Bill of Rights to mandate vaccinations, mask wearing, and quarantines.

We have done all of the above. It would be hard to imagine any planned agenda to destroy America that would have been as injurious as what we already suffered the last two years.

End of Article

Japan's Big Gender Problem



Gender disparity is a chronic problem for Japan.

In the World Economic Forum's 2022 Gender Gap Report, Japan ranked 116th out of 146 countries, by far the lowest among G-7 members. Only two of the government's 20 cabinet ministers are women -- the country's current women's empowerment minister is a man.

What will it take for Japan to narrow its glaring gender gap?

The following article appeared in the *Nikkei Asia* publication on Jan 24 describing the gap.

I think you will find it informative.

D. Miyoshi

Inside Japan's gender problem: The men tasked with empowering women

Pay gap and low numbers of women in politics persist as Kishida assumes G-7 leadership

By ALICE FRENCH, RURIKA IMAHASHI and WATARU SUZUKI, Nikkei staff writers January 25, 2023



Masanobu Ogura, left, Japan's minister in charge of women's empowerment and gender equality, tries on a pregnancy jacket with two male colleagues in April 2021. © Kyodo

TOKYO -- On a sunny day in Machida, western Tokyo, back in April 2021, a man in a suit was catching the attention of passersby. From underneath his dark, formal jacket, the unmistakable bulge of a pregnant belly was impossible to ignore.

His curious get-up attracted quite the crowd, and after delivering a stump speech and talking with supporters, the apparent medical mir-





Japan's Big Gender Problem

acle caught a train back to Japan's parliament building.

As part of the government's efforts to encourage more couples to have children, Masanobu Ogura, a lower house lawmaker for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, had been getting a flavor of what it is like for women to be seven months pregnant.

For two days, along with two fellow male LDP politicians, Ogura wore a 7.3-kg pregnancy jacket while working, cleaning, sleeping and even attempting to cut his toenails.

After one night wearing the fake belly, Ogura posted on his Twitter account: "I had trouble sleeping because of the pressure on my stomach, and my body hurts because I couldn't roll over. It was just one night for me, but I dread to think what it is like for people who are really pregnant."



"I dread to think what it is like for people who are really pregnant": Masanobu Ogura, left, Japan's minister for gender equality, is tasked with empowering women and slowing the decline in Japan's birthrate. (Photo courtesy of Cabinet Office)

Sixteen months later, in August 2022, Ogura would be appointed Japan's minister in charge of women's empowerment and gender equality, and his "pregnancy experiment" would come back to haunt him.

"I received a lot of criticism from women who had gone through pregnancy," Ogura told Nikkei Asia in a recent interview. "They were saying: 'Don't pretend you understand what it's like after just wearing a jacket for two days. The struggle of pregnancy goes on for 10 months, and comes with the pain of giving birth.'"

"It brought home to me how much men, including myself, don't understand [about women]" Ogura added.

An Oxford University alumnus with 10 years of LDP membership under his belt, Ogura was the first man since 2017 to take the women's empowerment post, following a string of five consecutive female ministers. He is the only male gender equality minister among

the Group of Seven nations.

Jan. 1 marked the beginning of Japan's G-7 presidency, with the country set to host the annual summit in Hiroshima this May. By default, Ogura will chair this year's G-7 gender equality ministers' meeting, which is scheduled for June in Nikko, Tochigi prefecture.

At last year's G-7 gender summit, held in Berlin in October, Ogura signed a joint statement with his six fellow equality ministers, committing to "an ambitious gender transformative agenda." The agenda includes supporting women's entrepreneurship and advancing LGBTQ rights. Japan is the only G-7 member not to legally recognize same-sex unions.

"[Under Japan's G-7 presidency] I hope that awareness of gender diversity will increase and we will move toward a society without gender-based discrimination," Ogura told Nikkei.

Making good on this agenda will not be easy. Gender disparity is a chronic problem for Japan -- it ranked 116th out of 146 countries in the World Economic Forum's 2022 Gender Gap Report and is the lowest ranking, by far, among G-7 nations.



Gender equality ministers from the Group of Seven nations pose during the Gender Equality Ministerial meeting in Berlin in October 2022. © AP

Japan's gender pay gap is also the widest in the G-7: Women in full-time work earned on average 22.4% less than their male counterparts in 2021, according to government data.

And women's overall share of wealth in Japan is low, too. The Boston Consulting Group in 2022 estimated that women hold 18% of Japan's total wealth -- around half the average for Asia, and less than half the figure for the U.S. In fact, Japan is excluded from BCG's regional women's wealth figures for Asia as its statistics are so low they distort the average.

As part of his flagship "new capitalism" policy, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has promised to improve these figures and promote Japanese women's "economic independence." Gender equality min-





Japan's Big Gender Problem

ister Ogura finds himself at the forefront of this mission.

"The gender pay gap is a big issue in Japan, along with low female representation in management positions," Ogura told Nikkei. In order to address this, "we need to create an environment where women can make work compatible with child-rearing."

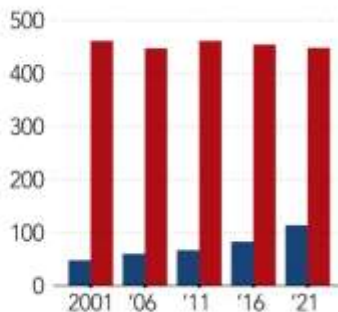
As well as equality, Ogura is the cabinet minister responsible for slowing Japan's declining birthrate. Gender and demographics are inextricable for the Japanese government as it grapples with rapidly falling births -- the country counted a record low of 798,561 births in the 12 months through May 2022. OECD data released this month reveal Japan also has the highest proportion (27%) of middle-aged women without children among developed nations.

Addressing parliament on Monday, Kishida said Japan's plummeting birthrate was putting the country "on the brink of being unable to maintain social functions." He pledged to implement "unprecedented countermeasures" to deal with the issue, that would "allow everyone to participate in child-rearing, regardless of age or gender."

Japanese men's share of child care and housework remains far below women's

(Average number of minutes spent per day on care- and housework-related activities by married couples with children aged under six)

■ Men ■ Women



Source: Statistics Bureau of Japan

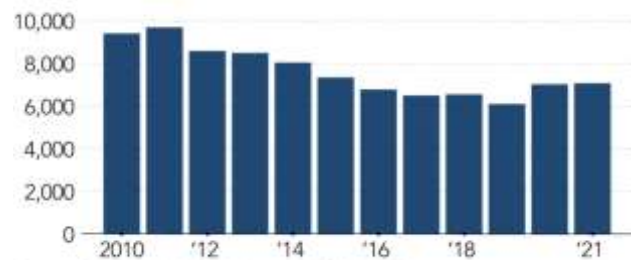
Ogura told Nikkei that redistributing some of the burden of child care from women to men was key to solving Japan's population problem. A government survey released in 2021 showed that the average time spent on unpaid care and housework by married women with young children was more than seven hours per day -- around four times that of men.

And COVID-19 has only widened that gap. Research by UN Women shows that women worldwide took on a disproportionate amount of extra unpaid care work during the pandemic, especially when schools were closed during lockdowns.

In Japan, the added pressure on women throughout the pandemic was reflected in a rise in the female suicide rate.

Japan's female suicide rate rose during the pandemic

(Number of suicide cases)



Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan

The country registered 1,696 suicides by working women in 2021, up 28% from the average between 2015 and 2019, according to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. Working men's suicide rate fell by 6% during the same period.

"I will work hard to encourage men to get more involved with child care and take more paternity leave," Ogura told Nikkei.

Sex and power

But in a cabinet where 18 out of 20 ministers are men, Ogura's appointment could be part of the problem. Since the women's empowerment minister post was created by late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2012, the role has been a reliable way for Japanese prime ministers to ensure some female representation in their cabinet.

Women are few and far between in Japanese politics -- the country came 165th out of 193 countries in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's December 2022 ranking of women in parliament. Only 9.9% of members in the Diet's lower house are women, a proportion that rises to 25.8% in the partially elected upper house.

Ogura is the second man to take the women's empowerment cabinet post out of nine ministers so far. The last man in the job was Katsunobu Kato, who held the position from 2015 until 2017 and was succeeded by a line of five women.

Japan trails other G-7 nations on gender equality in parliament

(Percentage of parliamentary members who are female)

Rank (Out of 193)	Country	Lower house/ single house	Upper house/ senate
36	France	37.3	35.1
44	Germany	34.9	33.8
45	U.K.	34.6	28.6
56	Italy	32.3	34.5
61	Canada	30.5	51.6
69	U.S.	28.7	25.3
165	Japan	9.9	25.8

As of December 2022

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union





Japan's Big Gender Problem

Kishida's decision to put Ogura in charge of empowering women, particularly during Japan's G-7 presidency, therefore raised some eyebrows. And nearly six months in, women's rights advocates are not convinced by the choice.

"That Kishida put a man in charge of women's empowerment proves that he is not at all interested in gender equality or listening to women," Misako Iwamoto, gender studies professor at Mie University and veteran feminist commentator, told *Nikkei*.

After reshuffling his cabinet in August, Kishida told reporters he had chosen Ogura because of the "young, fresh viewpoint" he would bring to the role. At 41, Ogura is the cabinet's youngest member.

"He's sharp and quick to grasp things," Masaru Fukazawa, a volunteer at Ogura's campaign office in his constituency of Machida, Tokyo, told *Nikkei*. "[Ogura is] a politician for the next generation."

Ogura sees both benefits and drawbacks to being a man in his position. "Men do not know women's true feelings," he told *Nikkei*. "But precisely because I do not understand [women's issues], it is even more important for me to listen to women's opinions and try to enact suitable policies."



Marchers take part in a demonstration for women's rights in Tokyo on International Women's Day in March 2022. © AFP/Jiji

Having a man at the helm of the gender equality movement can be a good thing, said Mariana Duarte, gender program officer at the Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Male politicians' cooperation on gender issues is very important," she said. "And if there is pressure from an active feminist civil movement, progress can be made even under male-led governments."

But Japan lacks such a vocal, unified feminist movement, making female representation at the top all the more important, said Iwamoto. "Japan has many small, scattered women's rights groups," she told *Nikkei*. "But there is little opportunity for women to get their voices heard publicly, especially on taboo topics such as reproductive rights."

"Male politicians' cooperation on gender issues is very important."

Mariana Duarte, gender program officer, Inter-Parliamentary Union

When Kishida became prime minister in October 2021, he initially chose Seiko Noda, his former leadership rival and longtime advocate of women's rights, as women's empowerment minister. Noda was one of three women in Kishida's first cabinet lineup and stayed in the post for almost a year.

In last summer's reshuffle, Noda was dropped from the cabinet after she was found to have links with the scandal-ridden Unification Church. Critics say Kishida's choice of Ogura over a female successor for Noda was a step backward for women's political representation. The current cabinet features two women: Keiko Nagaoka and Sanae Takaichi, who were put in charge of education and economic security, respectively.



Seiko Noda, one of three women in Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's first cabinet, was Japan's minister for women's empowerment from October 2021 to August 2022. © Reuters

"Even if it was a very conservative woman, the presence of a female minister [for women's empowerment] alone would have shown that the government wants to listen to women on gender issues," said Mikiko Eto, retired professor of politics at Tokyo's Hosei University and author of "Women and Political Inequality in Japan."

Eto added she believes Ogura was appointed to his post to focus on solving Japan's declining birthrate, given his background in the field, including his "pregnancy experience."

"Improving women's rights is not Ogura's priority," Eto said.

Ogura said he is committed to "humbly listening to women's opinions" throughout his time in office. He added that there may be some things he can achieve that a female minister could not.

The incumbency effect





Japan's Big Gender Problem

Ogura's appointment neatly encapsulates Japan's problem with female political representation, which experts say is essential for making progress on gender equality societywide.

"Japan cannot expect to see progress on things like female entrepreneurship and the pay gap before first addressing the lack of women in leadership," Stephan Knobel, head of global wealth market sizing at BCG, told Nikkei.



Only two members of Prime Minister Kishida's second cabinet, announced in Aug. 2022, are women. Kishida is seen in the center of the front row. (Photo by Uichiro Kasai)

According to BCG's 2020 report on women's wealth, increasing female representation in leadership positions will be the main driver of female wealth in Japan until 2026. This is in contrast to Europe and North America, where wage equality and entrepreneurial activities are the primary drivers.

The next chance for Japan to increase its proportion of women in politics will be in April, during local elections that will take place a month before Kishida is set to host the G-7 leadership summit.

In 2018, Japan passed an Act on the Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field, requiring state and local governments, along with political parties, to "endeavor" to promote gender equality. The act was followed in 2020 by a new government target of at least 35% female candidates in all local and national elections by 2025.

But neither the 2018 law nor the 2020 target came with any enforceable measures, such as gender quotas.

In 2019's local elections, women made up 16% of all candidates nominated for local assemblies, and 14% of those who were elected. In the 2021 general election, 18% of the candidates were female.

"The LDP's dominance prevents any significant improvement in women's representation."

Mikiko Eto, political expert and author

The IPU's Duarte says Japan will not see real progress if the government does not implement compulsory gender quotas. "What we have seen -- not just in Japan, but everywhere -- is that if it's just an intention, or an idea, or a voluntary pledge, that doesn't suffice," she said. "If you really want to make change rapidly, you need mandatory measures for political parties to nominate more women."

On Japan's chronically low proportion of female candidates, Ogura told Nikkei that the issue is "something for political parties, not the government, to decide on." He added, "I would like to see more diversity in politics."

Candidates for the local elections are yet to be announced, but equality advocates are not holding out hope for more female representation.

"If anything, I feel like things are regressing," said Mieko Yoshimura, governor of Yamagata prefecture, in northwest Japan.

Yoshimura, who was elected in 2009 and has been reelected three times since, is one of only two female governors in a nation of 47 prefectures. "When I first became governor, I was one of four females, but now it is just me and [Tokyo Gov.] Yuriko Koike. Honestly, I do not feel like we are making progress on gender equality."



Mieko Yoshimura from Yamagata prefecture, in northern Japan, is one of the nation's two female governors out of a total of 47. (Photo courtesy of Yamagata Prefectural Office)

A mother and former educator with a degree in educational psychology, Yoshimura's policies focus on improving education and supporting families with young children. "At the children's workshops I run, I meet a lot of young girls who tell me they want to become a governor, like me, when they grow up," she said.

"But it is very hard for women to get into politics," Yoshimura added. "It is expensive to start a campaign, and there is little support, nor opportunities to learn about politics. We need to make it easier for women to become politicians."

"Honestly, I do not feel like we are making progress on gender equality."





Japan's Big Gender Problem

Mieko Yoshimura, Yamagata prefectural governor

Parties say they are making extra efforts to support female candidates this time around. A representative for the ruling LDP told Nikkei the party will work hard to nominate women in constituencies with no female candidates.

However, "incumbent LDP politicians are given priority to run over new candidates, which limits the number of new candidates our party gets behind," the representative said.

Politics expert Eto calls this "the incumbency effect." The LDP has been in power since 2012 and has such a large number of incumbents in local and national assemblies that there are not enough new positions for women, or younger men, to step into.

"Speaking simply," Eto said, "the LDP's dominance prevents any significant improvement in women's representation."

According to Nikkei Asia research, as of August 2022, the LDP has the lowest proportion of female parliamentary members of all major parties in the Diet: 11%, or 43 out of 379. The Japanese Communist Party has the highest, with 33%, or seven out of 21.

Some opposition parties have been calling for a quota system but say hurdles remain high.

"I would love to see a quota system implemented," Akiko Okamoto, female lower house lawmaker and acting chair of the opposition Constitutional Democratic Party's Office for Gender Equality Promotion, told Nikkei. "But Japan's current electoral system -- where voters tend to choose based on an individual candidate rather than a party -- makes it difficult."



Akiko Okamoto, a lawmaker and acting head of gender equality for the opposition Constitutional Democratic Party, speaks in Japan's parliament in Tokyo in June 2022. © Jiji

Since late last year, the CDP has been holding online public speaking workshops for female hopefuls ahead of April's election. Okamoto said the party is also fundraising to provide financial aid for

female candidates that need help with child care.

But the patriarchal culture at the core of Japan's political sphere means few women are motivated to run for office in the first place, Okamoto said. She recalled arriving at the Diet one morning to find a policy decision she had discussed with male colleagues the previous day had mysteriously been reversed overnight, at a late-night drinking session Okamoto had not been invited to.

"This 'nighttime culture' makes politics unwelcoming for women, especially those with children," she said.

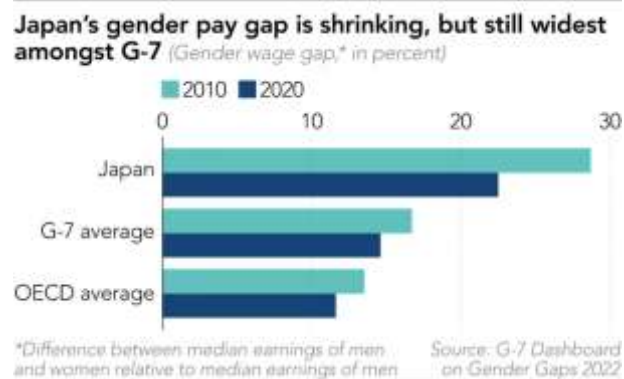
Gov. Yoshimura agrees that sexism remains rife. "Whenever I give a speech or attend an event, I get comments, good and bad, about my outfits or my lipstick," she said. "Male politicians don't have to worry about those things, so I do feel at a disadvantage."

Equality advocates say large-scale, systemic change is needed to improve gender balance in politics. "From a young age, girls are taught not to value themselves, and that they belong out of the spotlight," researcher Iwamoto said. "Until we update the cultural belief that women are always a second choice, we will not be able to move forward. But quotas would be a good place to start."

A persistent pay gap

While progress on gender parity remains elusive in politics, the government has set its sights on tackling economic inequality instead.

Prime Minister Kishida's main focus so far has been closing the G-7's largest gender pay gap. In mid-2022, he introduced a law making it compulsory for all companies employing over 300 people to publicly disclose the difference in pay between male and female employees.



But the reasons behind Japan's wage gap are complex, and experts say there is no one-size-fits-all solution. According to a government



Japan's Big Gender Problem

survey, 54.4% of employed women in Japan were engaged in non-permanent employment in 2020, compared with 22.2% of men.

Women in nonpermanent positions are not only likely to be paid less, but are also more vulnerable to employers' adjustment strategies, such as reducing shifts and layoffs, Zhou Yanfei, a labor economics professor at Japan Women's University, told Nikkei.

Minister Ogura told Nikkei he was encouraging companies to offer more permanent positions to women and move toward "the regularization of employment."

But even for women with permanent positions, there are barriers to earning more. An outdated section of Japan's National Pension Act qualifies spouses aged 20-59 who earn less than 1.3 million yen (\$10,000) per year to be covered by their employed partner's pension and health insurance for free.



Female commuters are seen outside Tokyo Station on Jan. 19. (Photo by Yo Inoue)

The system was introduced in the 1980s to encourage housewives to support their working husbands at home. Now, the law motivates some women in low-earning or part-time jobs not to ask for, or even refuse, pay increases or promotions that might send them over the 1.3 million yen threshold, Zhou told Nikkei.

Ogura said the relatively low number of women working in well-paid industries, such as tech, is also driving economic gender inequality.

"The 'digital gap' was a shared challenge among all G-7 members at our meeting last year," he told Nikkei. "Women only make up 19% of those working in the digital sphere in Japan, and there are few female role models in the tech industry."

Ogura believes the key to bridging this gap is encouraging more girls to continue studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics after high school. School-age girls in Japan score the highest of all G-7 nations on PISA tests -- an internationally recognized assessment measuring 15-year-old students' reading, mathe-

matics and science literacy. "But gender disparity in science and tech subjects appears once women enter university and employment," he said.



Masanobu Ogura, Japan's minister in charge of women's empowerment and gender equality, poses for a portrait during an interview with Nikkei Asia in October 2022. (Photo by Yuki Kohara)

Women only accounted for 17% of students in Japan pursuing STEM subjects at the tertiary level of education in 2019, according to the OECD. The average ratio across 36 countries surveyed was 32%.

To address this disparity, "I hope to provide proactive support for female scholars working in STEM in Japanese universities," Ogura said. "We also need to tackle the unconscious bias that prevents some tech companies from hiring women."

"Don't ask for too much"

Increasing the number of women in tech is also key to invigorating Japan's startup industry, a central goal of Kishida's "new capitalism." The government aims to increase the number of startups in Japan tenfold over the next five years, and Ogura hopes that women, who currently make up 30% of Japan's entrepreneurs, will be instrumental in achieving that goal.

"I will work to encourage female entrepreneurship and increase the number of female role models in the startup space by holding networking events and workshops," he said.

Those within the startup sphere say gender equality still feels a long way off. Anri Samata, founder of venture capital fund Anri, told Nikkei that the startup ecosystem is "a male-dominated place where men empower men."



What's Worse Than a Chinese Spy Balloon



Prime Minister Kishida, left, talks to winners of the 2022 Nippon Startup Awards in June 2022. © Jiji

Only 2% of Japan's top 50 startups to receive funding in 2019 had a woman on their founding team, according to a 2022 report by Japan's Financial Services Agency. To combat the gender gap in startup funding, Samata set a goal in 2020 to make female entrepreneurs account for 20% of the companies he invests in. He achieved the goal last year.

Some businesswomen, however, already see Japan's ecosystem as a lost cause. "There's some kind of mental block when it comes to gender diversity," said Yukiko Kimura, founder and former CEO of content creation startup Genic Lab, who recently left Japan to pursue a master's degree at Columbia Business School in the U.S.

"In the West, there is an understanding that having more diversity -- in your company or your government -- is a good thing," Kimura told Nikkei. "But in Japan, the social pressure on women to get married and start a family still overshadows the benefits of gender diversity."

"In Japan, female startup founders are often told: 'You're a woman, so don't ask for too much.'"

Yukiko Kimura, founder of content creation startup Genic Lab

In 2019, 44.3% of men and 36.6% of women in Japan agreed with or were ambivalent toward the statement "husbands should go to work; wives must protect the home," according to a 2020 government report. "As a woman, if you don't get married and have a child, people will pity you," Kimura said.

Kimura sold Genic Lab -- which she founded in 2017 as a service to connect Japanese female content creators in rural areas with merchandisers -- and exited Japan's startup industry in 2021. "There were no female mentors in my field, and I did not feel like I was respected by some male investors," she said. "In Japan, female startup founders trying to raise funds are often told: 'You're a woman, so don't ask for too much.'"

"Girls in Japan are not taught to have an entrepreneurial spirit or to go chasing after money. If you make a lot of money for yourself,

people will assume it came from your husband, or even a sugar daddy," Kimura said.

Ogura acknowledges there are a lot of cultural barriers to overcome before Japan experiences a real increase in women-led startups, or female leaders in any field. "If men do not have awareness of gender problems and some understanding of women, there will be no breakthrough," he told Nikkei. "As a male minister, I cannot say I feel like I understand women's issues, but I'm determined to try."

End of Article

What's Worse Than a Chinese Spy Balloon



According to Chris Chappell on China Uncensored YouTube, if you thought a Chinese spy balloon was bad, wait till you get a load of TikTok. The Chinese Communist Party considers itself at war with the United States and has been engaging in a campaign of unrestricted warfare against it for decades. The real China threat is the one you can't see.

Here is what Chappell said on his YouTube program on Feb 11, 2023. I provide it here for your reading enjoyment.

D. Miyoshi

China is Doing Way Worse Things than a Chinese Spy Balloon





What's Worse Than a Chinese Spy Balloon



If there are explosions, Americans are in to it. I was pretty surprised how the Chinese Spy Balloon story took off. I have been on this program for 10 years. So my reaction was “This is what people are freaking out about? A little spy balloon?” I wish people had gotten this up in arms about, you know, all the genocide, the organ harvesting, the rape as a form of torture. That’s like the mafia disposing of a dead body and being mad because their shoes are made out of real leather. But I get it, those things don’t quite have the same impact of a Chinese balloon being blown up by a U.S. Sidewinder missile.

Like, I said, I really get it, But, come on, even if you don’t care at all about human rights in China, there are like a million more serious threats from the Chinese Communist Party. For example, did you know China is using private equity funds to gain access to critical cutting-edge US tech. I made a whole episode about it this week. It was one of our lowest performing episodes. Guess, it lacked a little something (scene of exploding Chinese balloon with the National Anthem playing).

But seriously, China can probably get more sensitive information from investing in tech startups than anything a spy balloon could pick up. And you think a spy balloon is bad. Try TikTok. Yeah, it’s cool to watch a US fighter jet blow up a balloon. But 80 million Americans are on TikTok. TikTok is a Chinese spy app. It’s a weapon in your pocket. That is such a huge disconnect from the reality of the Chinese Communist Party threat. This is like being afraid of the

bumblebee while sunbathing in a snake pit.

Some people are now asking if war with China could be on the horizon. But the reality is China is already at war with the United States. In 1999 two Chinese colonels wrote a book called *Unrestricted Warfare*. It argued that war is no longer limited to military forces because the number of battlefields is virtually infinite and could include environmental warfare, financial warfare, trade warfare, cultural warfare, and legal warfare, to name just a few. So, if you think the Spy Balloon is bad, just wait till you hear how the Chinese Communist Party has already been waging war on America.

So what could be worse than a spy balloon you ask? Let’s dive in. Drug warfare. Drug overdoses are now the leading cause of unintentional death in the United States, more than gun homicides and car accidents combined. So many people are dying from drugs that it’s actually driving down the country’s life expectancy. Which is wild considering the US is a country that lives off of Big Macs If you are able to lower that “life” expectancy you know it’s serious. And a big chunk of those deaths are caused by a synthetic drug called fentanyl. Since 2013, China has been the principal source of the fentanyl flooding the US illicit drug market fueling the deadliest drug epidemic in US history. And they aren’t sprinkling fentanyl across the US from a spy balloon. China is supplying Mexican drug cartels with drug precursor ingredients, weapons, even handling their money laundering. So aside from actively killing Americans with drugs, what else is China doing that’s worse than a spy balloon?

Economic warfare. Now this might make you think of the trade war. But no, I’m not talking about the Trump administration’s so-called trade war. I’m talking about the trade war China was waging against the US for over a decade before the US offered any response. According to this report from the United States trade representative, when it comes to exports the Chinese government has been subsidizing local manufacturers like steel and aluminum factories and that’s allowed it to dump goods on the US market at unfairly low prices. That’s hurt US manufacturing and caused big job losses. But on the plus side, at least China isn’t dumping steel from spy balloons.

But dumping goods at low prices is just one of the many ways the Chinese Communist Party is waging economic warfare against the





What's Worse Than a Chinese Spy Balloon

US. For example, the CCP hacks the US a lot. The intellectual property China has stolen is roughly on the order of \$600 billion a year. Of course, what usually happens when a company gets hacked is that they hide it because it makes them look bad. And it's not just a few. The former NSA director said every major company in the US has been hacked. And according to FBI director Christopher Ray, China has stolen more US data than all other nations combined. Of course, that's not quite as invisible as a spy balloon. What also is not as visible is what was just above that spy balloon.

Which brings me to space warfare. You shouldn't be worried about the Chinese spy balloon you can see. You should be worried about all of China's spy satellites you can't see. According to this 2022 Defense Department report, China's satellite fleet contains more than 260 systems, second only to the US. The CCP basically has eyes everywhere. They are like Sauron. But in space. Which sounds horrifying but also like the coolest Lord of the Rings sequel ever. And China is also actively trying to blind America. According to a US general, China along with Russia, are attacking US satellites with lasers and jammers every day. Yes, China is using space lasers.

But satellites can't see everything. That's why China is also engaging in spy warfare. The Chinese Communist Party has an extensive spy network including even co-opting Americans. The FBI has to launch a new China probe every 12 hours. One of the reasons the US shutdown the Chinese consulate in Houston was because it was being used as a spy hub. The CCP also uses money to buy off influential Americans like this Harvard professor. Like FBI officers. Even Disney. And it's just not money. Back in 2022, Axios broke the story of Fang Fang, a Chinese national who was targeting American politicians. She used campaign fundraising, extensive networking, personal charisma and romantic or sexual relationships with at least two Midwestern mayors. In the spy world, this is called "the honeypot." Although I don't know if they are allowed to call it that in China since hearing about honeypots make Xi Jinping hungry.

One of Fang Fang's target was Eric Swalwell, who later became a US congressman and member of the House intelligence committee. Though he was eventually kicked out. So, as you can see, China has its eyes on every facet of American life. And of course, China even

has eyes in your pockets. Yes, they're quite naughty.

Which brings me to TikTok Warfare.

Now, I have already touched on this a bit, but the fact is TikTok is way scarier than any Chinese Spy Balloon. And not just because you can find Grandmas tweeting on it. Ugh. Eighty Million Americans use TikTok. And TikTok is owned by a Chinese company, one that's very loyal to the Chinese Communist Party. In its privacy policy, that you probably didn't read. TikTok says it monitors direct messages and will turn over that information to a government if there is an inquiry. What government? What inquiries? Why no government in particular! Maybe it's the government of lollipop land. Look how bright it is! Nothing shady here. TikTok also monitors your keystrokes allowing it to "capture personal user information like credit card numbers and passwords." I mean they claim they don't actually do that, they just have the power to and will never abuse it. Though TikTok's Chinese parent company did access the data of some pesky US journalists as well as everyday US citizens. And why shouldn't they? After all you all agreed to it when you signed their privacy policy. Hope it was worth it for all that wonderful content.

So while it's great to see people talking about the Chinese Communist Party and how it's a threat because of the spy balloon, the more important thing is for people to realize the much more serious ways the Chinese Communist Party is actively waging war on America. And other countries. It's time to focus on just the little things, instead of just the explosions.

Of course, people who watched China Uncensored are already clued in. And China Uncensored is only possible because of support from viewers like you.

End of Direct Transcript





Shootdowns of Spy Balloons and UFOs are increasing



Here is a photo of the US F22 about to shoot down the Chinese Spy Balloon on Feb 4. For a spy balloon you would think the spiers would make it transparent or at least match the color of the sky. But I digress. Following the balloon shootdown there has been a rash of sightings and shootdowns of other flying objects, not necessarily balloons. For your reading consideration, I present a recent article that appeared in *The New York Times* on Feb 14, covering these UFO shootdowns.

D. Miyoshi

The New York Times
The Morning
February 14, 2023



By German Lopez

Good morning. The recent shootdowns of flying objects show how quickly tensions between the U.S. and China can escalate.

A U.F.O. mystery

There is still a lot we don't know about the Chinese spy balloon and the three other objects the U.S. military shot out of the sky in recent days.

U.S. officials have not explained what kind of information the spy balloon was trying to obtain. They have revealed little about the other objects, though they did acknowledge yesterday that the three objects were not sending out communication signals. But we have

yet to learn what those objects were or what they were for.

China's role is another unanswered question. The U.S. has drawn a clear link between China and the spy balloon, though not with the other three objects. It's not clear whether the balloon was a sign that China is getting more aggressive, or if the U.S. is simply now detecting a kind of surveillance China has been doing for a long time.

The lack of answers has prompted much speculation. Some of it is silly, including jokes about aliens and U.F.O.s. Much of it is serious, about a potential second Cold War, this time between the U.S. and China.

Today's newsletter will break through the speculation and memes to explain what we know, and don't, about these flying objects and the implications of escalating tensions between the world's two biggest powers.

What we know

On three straight days starting Friday, the U.S. detected and shot down unidentified flying objects — first around Alaska, then over Canada and lastly over Lake Huron. They were low enough to pose a threat to civilian aircraft, John Kirby, a White House spokesman, said yesterday. (Here's a timeline of the events.)

None made it as far into the U.S. as the earlier Chinese spy balloon, which drifted across the continental U.S. before the military shot it down on Feb. 4 near the coast of South Carolina.

China continues to insist that the balloon was a civilian weather research airship that was blown off course. U.S. officials have released more details about what they say is a Chinese spy program that has sent high-altitude balloons over more than 40 countries for years.



John [Kirby, a White](#) House spokesman. Haiyun Jiang/The New York Times





What Happens if China Invades Taiwan?

What we don't know

There is still a lot that we don't know about the three most recent objects: What were they? Where did they come from? What were they for? Those basic questions have prompted others:

Is the U.S. now finding objects that have been there all along?

Maybe. "One of the reasons that we think we're seeing more is because we're looking for more," Kirby said. The U.S. has made new investments in its detection capabilities and tweaked existing systems to be more sensitive, partly in response to the Chinese spy balloon. Those systems could be picking up things that have long populated the sky, including more benign objects like airborne trash. (Thousands of balloons are floating above the Earth at any given moment, one expert said.)

Are the objects meant to spy on the U.S.?

They could be, but officials have not confirmed or denied that. America's adversaries, like China or Russia, could also be testing what they can fly over the U.S. without officials' noticing.

Is it aliens?

"There is no indication of aliens or extraterrestrial activity with these recent takedowns," the White House press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, said yesterday.

Is the U.S. using similar surveillance technology over China?

American officials denied China's allegations that the U.S. is flying high-altitude balloons over Chinese airspace. That response leaves open the possibility that the U.S. is using balloons over disputed territory or that it surveils China through other means, such as planes and satellites, as it has in the past.

The broader context

Relations between the U.S. and China has deteriorated in recent years as the Trump and Biden administrations took a more aggressive tone than previous administrations and imposed trade restrictions. But officials from both countries had recently started to work to mend ties.

The balloon episode could hurt those efforts. "As the U.S. has made clear it's not going to just let this fade, the Chinese response has gotten more aggressive," said my colleague Vivian Wang, who covers China.

In that sense, the flying objects are a case study for how tensions between the U.S. and China can rapidly escalate. Many analysts worry that existing strains between the two countries, like those over the status of Taiwan and China's territorial claims over nearby wa-

ters, could quickly transform into a deadly conflict.

"That could be Taiwan. It could be the South China Sea. It could be an unplanned military encounter in the sea or air," said my colleague Chris Buckley, who also covers China. "As we see with balloons — who predicted a balloon mini-crisis? — the possible permutations are endless."

There is another side to this, too: the risk of de-escalating too far. For years, some analysts have argued that the U.S. has done too little to contain China. In its response to the balloon, the Biden administration may be trying to show China that the U.S. is taking a more forceful approach than it has in the past.

End of Article

What Happens if China Invades Taiwan?



The following is a transcript of an interview in October by columnist Chris Williamson of Peter Zeihan, world renowned geo-political expert, on what would happen if China invades Taiwan.

Zeihan explains what he thinks would happen in such an invasion. Is the Chinese invasion of Taiwan likely? Does Peter Zeihan think that China would succeed if they tried to take Taiwan? Why does China want to invade Taiwan?

Here are Zeihan's responses to those questions.

D. Miyoshi





What Will Happen if China Invades Taiwan?



Williamson: What difference would it make if China invaded Taiwan?

Zeihan: That would probably lead to the end of the Chinese system as an industrialized economy in less than a year.

Williamson: Why? That's fascinating.

Zeihan: It's an open question of whether or not the Chinese could pull it off and with the Ukraine war, we finally got some good signpost of what it might look like. The Chinese have always assumed that the war would be a walkover, that no one else will get involved and that China is such a big place that everyone will just suck it up and move on. Well, that clearly hasn't happened with Ukraine and the United States and the West have a much tighter relationship with Taiwan than they do with Ukraine. Ukraine was only preparing for this war for eight years. Taiwan has been preparing for 60. You can walk to Ukraine from Russia. It's a bit of a swim to get to Taiwan. The sanctions that are in place against Russia would absolutely devastate China because while Russia has a lot of faults it's a major exporter of food and energy. China imports those things. Seventy Five percent of their oil is imported from a different continent. And 75% of their oil is imported. And then, I think it's really the boycotts that have really scared the Chinese the most. The idea that individual citizens might have any say on policy, they did not see that coming. They have no way to process that in a one-man state.

Williamson: Because they have a different set-up than what you have?

Zeihan: Yeah, exactly. So every assumption that they've based the last 40 years of military planning on is proven to be wrong. And then, of course there's the question of whether they could actually do it. If they did a slow-motion mobilization like the Russians did, it took three months, the Taiwanese would see that. They built a few nukes and so the cost of capturing Taiwan would be losing Shanghai and Beijing. That doesn't seem like a good plan so the only battle plan that I've seen that might work is if they just text every member of the Army and say go to a port, get on a fishing boat and sail. You would lose a million people in the crossing just to get to the beaches. So there's nothing about this that works and if they did pull it off even if they do capture Taiwan they are now cut off from global manufacturing, global investment, global energy and global food. The trucks stop running within a couple of months, the lights go out in less than six and that is all she wrote. Remember, agriculture is an industrial sector so you're talking about mass famine in under a year. Now normally I'd say the Chinese aren't stupid, they wouldn't do this, but it's a one-man show now and nobody wants to bring Xi any information because they don't know how he'll react. He's shot the messenger literally so many times that everything is a surprise to him.

Williamson: Yes, I understand what you mean. I suppose there's a lot of criticisms around the fact that the vote of a stupid person is worth as much as the vote of a well-educated person in a democracy. But the problem is, if you condense all of that power down to a single individual, the decision of an angry old grumpy individual is the same as those on a good day or those if they were less idiotic or somebody else had got to power. So, I suppose it's a forcing function that condenses all of these things down to one individual human that is just as fallible as the rest of us, maybe even more human.

Zeihan: If one human is perfect every time, then OK. But even a minor mistake just cascades through the system and it's a full cult of personality, so you know we got basically people who were zealots asleep trying to do what they think Xi wants them to do and just one of the more inane ones is seeing teams of people in hazmat gear disinfecting airport runways because they think that's what you have





Conspiracies that Were Actually True

to do for Covid. Just like people who talk about the Americans in a fact free zone. But it's nothing compared to what's going on in the Chinese system.

End of Interview

Conspiracies that Were Actually True



In the previous 3 newsletters, I presented a three part article entitled “What is a Conspiracy” that delved into the definition of what we, in the Western world, consider to be a conspiracy theory.

In this newsletter I would like to present to you an article by *Readers Digest* published on Dec 2, 2022 that reports on 12 Conspiracy theories that turned out to be actually true. I hope you find it both interesting and informative as I did.

D. Miyoshi

12 Conspiracy Theories That Actually Turned Out to Be True

By Lauren Cahn

They say the truth is stranger than fiction. That's no lie: All of these so-called "conspiracy theories" turned out to be legit.



noLimit46/Getty Images

I'm not crazy, you're all crazy!

Yeah, it's a conspiracy...conspiracy of silence! We're not saying that every cuckoo-bananas thing you hear is legitimate, we're just saying that's the case *sometimes*. These 12 theories were too crazy to be true—until they weren't.

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The dead baby project

Laughing at crazy conspiracy theories is good fun—until they turn out to be true. Take the conspiracy surrounding the “Project Sunshine,” for example. In the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.S. government commenced a major study to measure the effects of nuclear fallout on the human body.

Conspiracy: The government was stealing dead bodies to do radioactive testing.

The truth: The government was stealing *parts* of dead bodies. Because they needed young tissue, they recruited a worldwide network of agents to find re-





Conspiracies that Were Actually True

cently deceased babies and children, and then take samples and even limbs—each collected without notification or permission of the more than 1,500 grieving families.

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Oleksandra Naumenko/Shutterstock

Bad booze

Conspiracy: During Prohibition, the government poisoned alcohol to keep people from drinking.

The truth: Crazy conspiracy theories almost always suggest the government is behind it all—and they were right, again. Manufacturers of industrial alcohol had been mixing their product with dangerous chemicals for years prior to Prohibition. But between 1926 and 1933, the federal government pushed manufacturers to use stronger poisons to discourage bootleggers from turning the alcohol into moonshine. That didn't stop the bootleggers or their customers, and by the end of Prohibition, more than 10,000 Americans had been killed by tainted booze. Limiting alcohol is a health advice doctors can agree on, but these 11 health controversies and conspiracies still divide people.

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/REX/Shutterstock

The first lady who ran the country

Conspiracy: A stroke rendered President Woodrow Wilson incapable of governing, and his wife surreptitiously stepped in.

The truth: Wilson did suffer a debilitating stroke towards the end of his presidency—but the government felt it was in the country's best interest to keep things quiet. The public didn't learn about the stroke for months, during which time his wife, Edith Wilson, was making most executive decisions. Despite Mrs. Wilson claiming that she acted only as a "steward," historians who have analyzed the Wilson term in office confirm that for well over a year, Mrs. Wilson was effectively president.

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Pavel Kubarkov/Shutterstock

Government mind control

Conspiracy: The CIA was testing LSD and other hallucinogenic drugs on Americans in a top-secret exper-





Conspiracies that Were Actually True

iment on behavior modification.

The truth: The program was known as MK-ULTRA, and it was real. The CIA started by using volunteers; the novelist Ken Kesey was one notable subject. But the program heads soon began dosing people without their knowledge; MK-ULTRA left many victims permanently mentally disabled. Don't miss these 11 controversial medical theories that are actually true.

<https://www.thehealthy.com/healthcare/5-controversial-medical-theories-that-are-actually-true/>



David Magnus/REX/Shutterstock

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vipflash/Shutterstock

The Dalai Lama's impressive salary

Conspiracy: The Dalai Lama is a CIA agent.

The truth: Perhaps the reason the Dalai Lama is smiling in all those photos has something to do with the six-figure salary he pulled down from the U.S. government during the 1960s. According to declassified intelligence documents, he earned \$180,000 in connection with the CIA's funding of the Tibetan Resistance to the tune of \$1.7 million per year. The idea was to disrupt and hamper China's infrastructure.

John Lennon was under government surveillance

Conspiracy: The FBI was spying on former Beatle John Lennon.

The truth: Crazy conspiracy theories regarding celebs are always interesting—and this one is most certainly true. Like many counter-culture heroes, Lennon was considered a threat: "Anti-war songs, like "Give Peace a Chance" didn't exactly endear former Beatle John Lennon to the Nixon administration," NPR reported in 2010. "In 1971, the FBI put Lennon under surveillance, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service tried to deport him a year later." Lennon is one of 13 more notable celebrities you didn't realize were watched by the FBI.

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Syda Productions/Shutterstock

The government is spying on you

Conspiracy: With the advances in technology, the

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Conspiracies that Were Actually True

government is using its vast resources to track citizens.

The truth: In 2016, government agencies sent 49,868 requests for user data to Facebook, 27,850 to Google, and 9,076 to Apple, according to the Electronic Frontier Foundation (the EFF), a major nonprofit organization that defends civil liberties in the digital world and advises the public on matters of internet privacy. You've probably also heard that your computer camera could be used to spy on you—here's the real likelihood someone is watching you through that camera.

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ANL/REX/Shutterstock

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9dream studio/Shutterstock

Big Tobacco knew that cigarettes caused cancer

Conspiracy: For decades, tobacco companies buried evidence that smoking is deadly.

The truth: At the beginning of the 1950s, research was showing an indisputable statistical link between smoking and lung cancer, but it wasn't until the late 1990s that Philip Morris, the nation's largest cigarette maker at the time, even admitted that smoking could cause cancer.

Fake battle, real war

Conspiracy: The Gulf of Tonkin incident on August 2, 1964, was faked to provoke American support for the Vietnam War.

The truth: By the time news reached American ears, the facts surrounding the North Vietnamese attack on the American Naval ship *Maddox* were already fuzzy. Declassified intelligence documents have since revealed that the *Maddox* had provided support for South Vietnamese attacks on a nearby island and that the North Vietnamese were responding in kind, according to the U.S. Naval Institute. The event "opened the floodgates for direct American military involvement in Vietnam."

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Juan Carlos Llorca/AP/REX/Shutterstock

There is alien evidence in the American Southwest





Conspiracies that Were Actually True

Conspiracy: E.T. is buried in the desert of New Mexico.

The truth: This one is real: The Atari video game *E.T., the Extra-Terrestrial* failed so miserably that the company buried unsold cartridges in a desert landfill. (Wait, what did you think we meant? Real aliens? In New Mexico? Not yet, anyway.)

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sruilk/Shutterstock

Canada tried to develop gaydar

Conspiracy: The Canada government was so paranoid about homosexuality that it developed a “gaydar” machine.

The truth: It really happened: In the 1960s, the government hired a university professor to develop a way to detect homosexuality in federal employees. He came up with a machine that measured pupil dilation in response to same-sex-erotic imagery; the Canadian government used it to exclude or fire more than 400 men from civil service, the military, and the Mounties. The American government is just as guilty with these 10 secret U.S. government operations, revealed.

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napocska/Shutterstock

The Illuminati and the U.S. government

Conspiracy: A secret society that rules the world—the Illuminati—and the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) are in cahoots.

The truth: We’re here to tell you that a link does, in fact, exist. Of course, that “link” is actually a *hyper-link* (i.e., an electronic link between two Internet sites). If you type Illuminati backward—Itanimulli—into a web browser, you will land on the NSA web-site. Click this link if you dare: Itanimulli.com. Rumor has it this elite society includes tons of famous personalities, actors, actresses, and performers. Meanwhile, the royal family is in a league of their own since there are 18 insane conspiracy theories about the royal family

End of Article

Last Will and Testament (a Humorous Look)



Steve's Last Will and Testament;

Steve lived all his life in the Florida Keys and is on his deathbed and knows the end is near. His nurse, his wife, his daughter and two sons are with him. He asks for two witnesses to be present, and a camcorder be in place to record his last wishes, and when all is ready, he begins to speak:





Last Will and Testament



Advancing in a Time of Crisis



Financial Crisis Report



David M. Miyoshi is a California attorney at law with a Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent Rating for Attorneys. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Southern California, a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California, an MBA degree from Harvard University and an International Graduate degree from Waseda University in Tokyo.

He is Managing Attorney of Miyoshi Law, an International Law Firm where he approaches legal issues through a commercial lens and is a trusted legal and business advisor to his corporate and estate clients. In military service in Vietnam, he led a Combined Action Platoon as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and received the Naval Commendation Medal with "Combat V".

He appears in 14 *Who's Who* publications throughout the world and is listed as a specialist in international business, real estate and estate planning.

"My son, Doug, I want you to take the Ocean Reef houses"

"My daughter Kelly, you take the apartments between mile markers 100 and Tavernier."

"My son, Kevin, I want you to take the offices over in the Marathon Government Center."

"Cathy, my dear wife, please take all the residential buildings on the bay side on Blackwater Sound."

The nurse and witnesses are blown away as they did not realize his extensive holdings, and as Steve slips away, the nurse says, "Your husband must have been such a hard-working man to have accumulated all this property."

The wife replies, "The asshole had a paper route."

Remember, next time you hate your life, it's all about perspective. I have a friend who reads 2-3 books a week, works out twice a day, and has people who want to have sex with him all the time, yet complains about how much he hates prison.

Perspective matters.

D. Miyoshi

Trust and Estate Corner



Often my clients, friends and associates inquire about trusts, wills and estate planning. Therefore, each publication of *Financial Crisis Report* at the end will feature a simple factoid on Trusts and Estate Planning. For more information you may consult my website at www.miyoshilaw.com

Plan for the possibility of your own incapacity

While a will is only effective after your death, a trust can be used to control your assets when you are still living but no longer have the capacity to control the assets yourself.



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