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by Josh Sault

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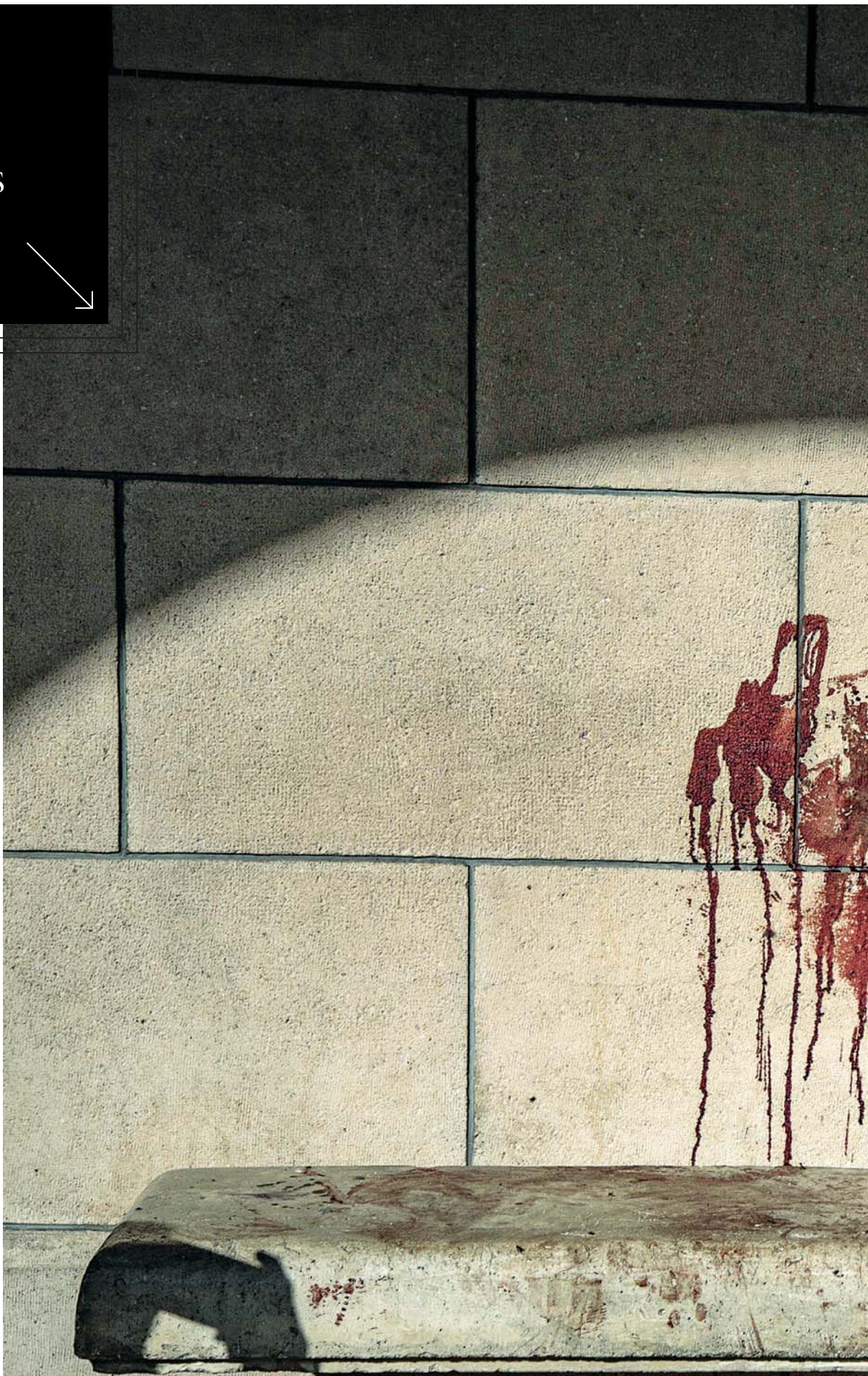
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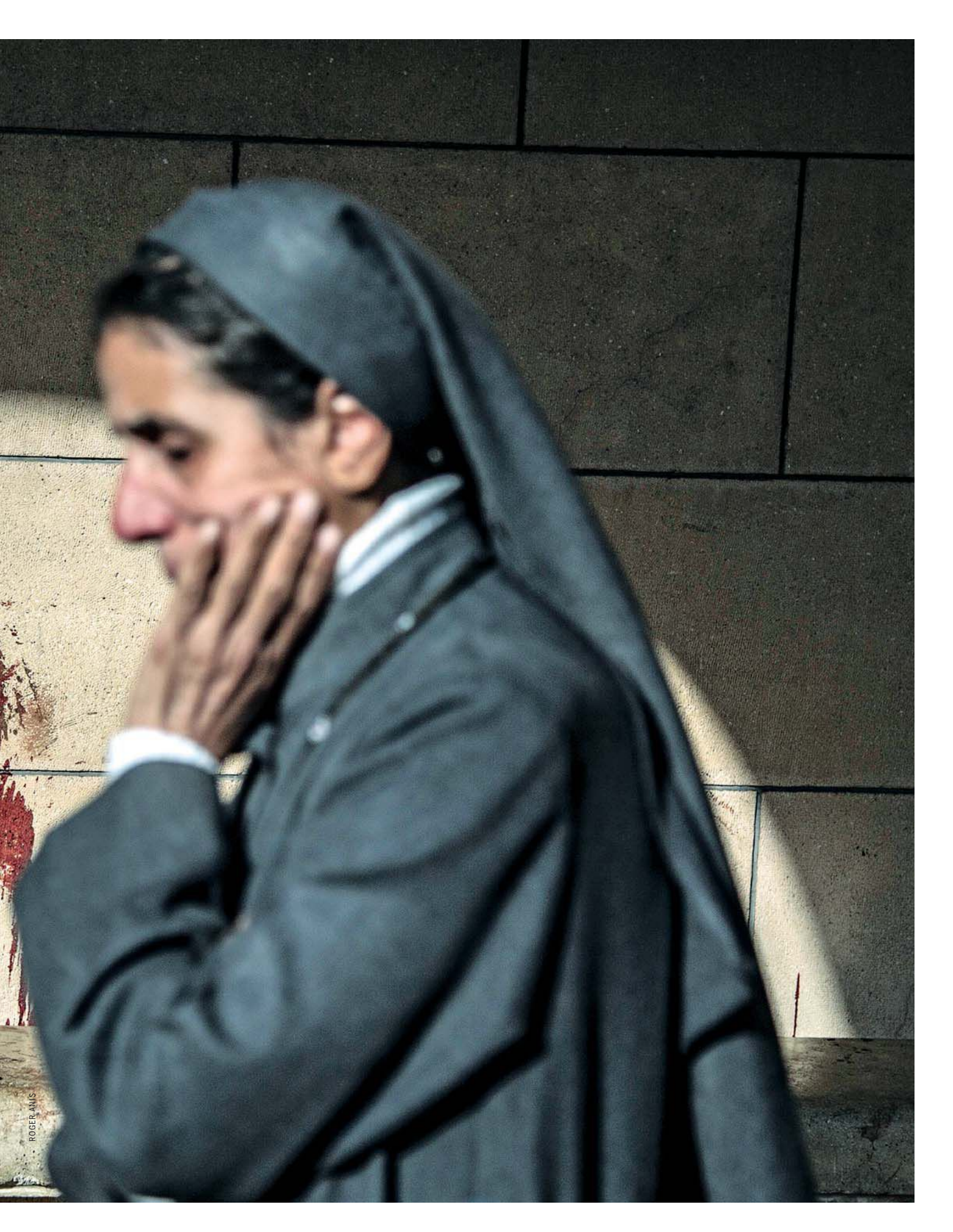
Bloody Sunday

Cairo—A Coptic nun walks past bloodstains after a suicide bomber killed at least 25 people on December 10, including many women and children attending Sunday Mass at the cathedral that is the seat of Egypt's Orthodox Christian Church. The bombing was the deadliest attack in recent years against Egypt's Christian minority, who make up about 10 percent of the country's 90 million people and are the Middle East's largest Christian community. Angry crowds gathered near the cathedral to vent their rage against President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi and his government, whom they feel has failed to protect them. "As long as Egyptian blood is cheap, down, down with any president," they chanted, according to Reuters.



ROGER ANIS





SYRIA

Last Breath

Saraqeb, Syria—A Syrian Civil Defense member climbs out of a crater created by an airstrike in rebel-held Idlib province, about 30 miles southwest of Aleppo, on December 11 as troops and militias loyal to president Bashar al-Assad pushed back the rebels and regained control of eastern Aleppo.

The U.S. tried to negotiate a temporary ceasefire so the remaining rebels could leave Eastern Aleppo, but Russia demanded their surrender, a legal adviser to the rebels told the AP. “This pushes us to fight to the last breath despite what we have to face,” the adviser said.



AMMAR ABDULLAH









SOUTH KOREA

Going South Fast

Seoul, South Korea—Crowds celebrate on December 9 after the country's National Assembly voted to impeach President Park Geun-hye. For months, the conservative leader has been embroiled in an influence-peddling scandal involving an informal adviser, Choi Soon-sil, who allegedly had Rasputin-like influence over the president. (Park has apologized but denied wrongdoing.) In the next few months, South Korea's Constitutional Court will decide whether to boot her from office and hold new elections.

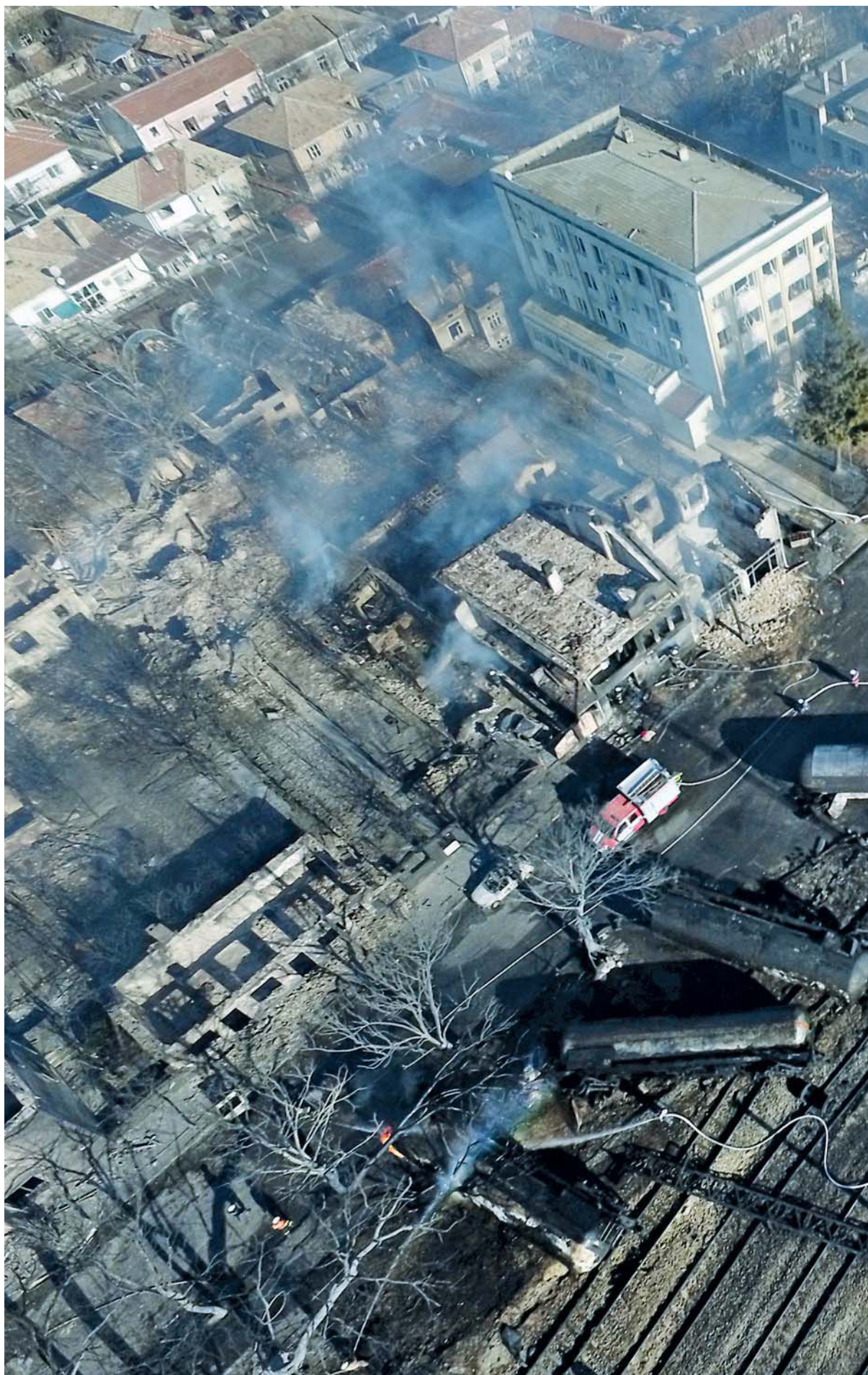
BULGARIA

Death, Smoke and Flames

Hitrino, Bulgaria— The scene looked like something from Syria's front lines: On December 10, a cargo train derailed in northeastern Bulgaria, killing at least seven. The train had been carrying propylene, a highly flammable gas, and the blast was so powerful it leveled dozens of buildings, trapping people beneath the rubble. The authorities quickly evacuated the village, and the government later announced a national day of mourning. As the death toll climbed, prosecutors were still piecing together how this happened.



PETAR PETROV







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PULPIT BULLY

Big business loves Trump's plans for tax cuts and deregulation, but it's nervous about trade—and those tweets

IN WASHINGTON, D.C., everyone is trying to figure out whether Donald Trump will *really* change the way things work around here. Consider the American Action Forum, a highly respected Republican-leaning think tank. Its head, Douglas Holtz-Eakin, once led the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, was a top economic adviser to John McCain during the senator's 2008 presidential bid and was a distinguished commissioner of the congressionally chartered panel that investigated the origins of the financial crisis (where I was a staff member). The AAF is a font of mainstream Republican thinking—advocating lower taxes and less regulation, and offering policy papers that cut against Trump's campaign rhetoric on immigration, free trade and reforming entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare.

I called Holtz-Eakin in early December to ask him about Trump's recent remarks about Carrier, the air-conditioning giant and a division of United Technologies. On the campaign trail,

Trump chided Carrier for its plans to move jobs from Indiana to Mexico. (Don't mistake this for Trump's threats against a Mexican-American judge from Indiana. That's another kettle of tweets.) Then, early in December, Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence, who is still the governor of Indiana, announced they had persuaded Carrier, mostly through state tax incentives, to keep some of those jobs here.

Trump's supporters and most Americans (if we still believe polls) celebrated the announcement, but Holtz-Eakin was nonplussed. He said the move was not "a substitute for fixing the big things in the economy," citing regulatory reform and lower taxes, among other things. But Holtz-Eakin isn't worried that Carrier is part of a larger trend of Trump taking on individual companies—at least not yet. "This is one ad hoc episode," he says. "He hasn't even been sworn in yet. Let's see."

But Carrier wasn't just one episode. Not long after I spoke with Holtz-Eakin, Trump again took

BY
MATTHEW COOPER
@mattzcoop



DARON CUMMINGS/AP

+
**ORGASMS
AND ULCERS:**
C-suite execu-
tives like Trump's
business-friendly
Cabinet. What they
don't like: all this
talk of trade wars.



to Twitter, only this time his target was Boeing and the cost of its work on new presidential aircraft. The current planes, collectively known as Air Force One, are more than 25 years old. It takes a decade to come up with new jets that include the wartime communications, defensive countermeasures and other Tom Clancyesque touches that make the 747 a flying White House. “Cancel order!” Trump tweeted, irked by the price tag. His outburst came, perhaps coincidentally, on the same morning Boeing’s CEO expressed concern that the Donald’s social media missives about China threatened the aerospace manufacturer’s lucrative market. Boeing stock plummeted on Trump’s 140-ish-character bark but later recovered. In another weirdly hands-on moment later that day, the president-elect appeared in the lobby of Trump Tower with the richest man in Japan, Masayoshi Son. The two announced that Son’s company, SoftBank, would

invest \$50 billion in the U.S. Without any details, reporters were stuck looking at what appeared to be a page from a PowerPoint presentation in Trump’s hands to look for clues. This is doing business in Trump’s America: orgasms one day, ulcers the next.

No one is surprised that Trump, who’s infamous for his tweets, is turning out to be secretive and unpredictable. And C-suite executives like his business-friendly Cabinet. Trump’s pick to head the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, the attorney general of Oklahoma, is a climate change denier so close to the fossil fuels industry he once submitted a letter to the agency drafted by Devon Energy. Trump’s nominee to be labor secretary, Andrew Puzder, is a fast-food mogul whose properties include Carl’s Jr. and Hardee’s. No Republican president since World War II has put a CEO in that job, in part out of deference to organized labor.

+ **SWAMPLANDIA:** Trump might be able to use social media spin to claim victories against companies like Boeing, Ford and Carrier. But industrywide tariffs will be much harder to get past the business lobbies.

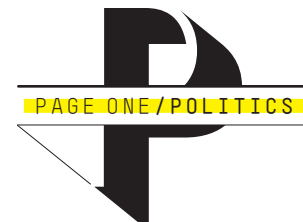


The private equity firm that owns Puzder's company is named after a character in a novel by Ayn Rand, the crusty mid-20th-century novelist who became a deity to libertarians. (Puzder is a fan.) On December 8, Pence even stopped by the Washington, D.C., headquarters of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), a large trade group, to get its opinion on which regulations should be eliminated.

After eight years jousting with the Obama administration, business execs seem ecstatic about this kind of solicitousness. But many worry that Trump is turning into a pulpit bully, using the tools of his office to lash out at anything that irks him. Days after the Carrier deal, Trump lambasted the local union head who represents the plant's workers. He's said the president-elect had overstated the deal's benefits, and no CEO wants a callout like that. Months earlier, during the campaign, Trump tweeted that he opposes the proposed merger of AT&T and Time-Warner. "We're really happy with what could happen [under the Trump administration]," says one Republican at a Washington trade association, noting Trump's positions on taxes and cutting regulations. "But you have to be nervous that he'll give you the evil Twitter eye."

This apprehension is understandable, given the special relationship between the business world and the GOP. The business lobbies, both big and small, tend to favor Republican policies. In the last campaign cycle, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce backed only GOP candidates for the U.S. Senate. (Usually, there are a few Democrats tossed in.) The big lobbying groups like the Business Roundtable (which represents the largest corporations), the chamber (which represents businesses of all sizes) and various other groups (from NAM to the National Federation of Independent Business) tend to lean Republican because the party has largely supported lowering taxes and cutting regulations, along with free trade and immigration reform.

Trump spent much of his campaign denouncing the very trade agreements these groups have been supporting—from the North American Free Trade Agreement to the now scuttled Trans-Pacific Partnership. Business groups are concerned about this stance. But they're hoping he won't go too far and seek those major tariffs on Chinese goods that he shouted about in rallies. In early December, they received an encouraging sign when Trump named Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, known as a free trader, to be U.S. ambassador to Beijing. And they're glad House Republicans have sent a



signal to the administration that they're opposed to giant import duties. "I don't want to get into some kind of trade war," Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), the House majority leader, told reporters after Trump fired off a series of tweets in early December threatening a 35 percent tariff on companies that move jobs overseas. House Speaker Paul Ryan weighed in too. "I think we can get at the goal here," told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "which is to keep American businesses American, build things in America and sell them overseas—that can be properly addressed with comprehensive tax reform."

Business groups know Trump can't unilaterally impose a tariff on a company without Congress's approval. And even if the president-elect could get lawmakers on board, it's probably illegal to impose a tax on one company. Trump probably knows this too, which is why he's willing to claim victory even when there was no battle.

"YOU HAVE TO BE NERVOUS THAT HE'LL GIVE YOU THE EVIL TWITTER EYE."

After a phone call with Ford's chairman, Trump triumphantly tweeted that the car manufacturer was keeping its Lincoln plant in Louisville, Kentucky. The company had never planned to move its plant out the Bluegrass State, but no matter. Trump said he'd won. So he did.

Where Trump might lose, however, is on industrywide tariffs. Alan Tonelson, an economist and longtime trade hawk, is somewhat optimistic that Trump can defeat the business lobby. "He thoroughly routed all of his Republican primary opponents who were favorites of the Business Roundtable and beat them in large part because of trade," he says.

That's true. But winning your party's nomination, or even the presidency, is easier than draining the Washington swamp. Just ask Barack Obama. ■

A CRACK IN THE WALL

Rezai Karim was worried about being deported—until he was attacked with a butcher’s knife. It may help him legally stay in the U.S.

ON A CLOUDY evening in August, Rezai Karim and his girlfriend were swimming in the pool outside of their new home in Roanoke, Virginia, when it started to rain. They headed inside, still damp, and made their way upstairs to their third-floor apartment. As they opened their front door, a man appeared behind them and forced his way inside. “Allahu Akbar!” he shouted, then slashed them with a butcher’s knife. “The next thing I remember,” Karim says, “is that I’m on the floor.”

The now-34-year-old software engineer managed to stand up and wrestle the attacker off his girlfriend, and the couple bolted downstairs and out into the rain. The assailant followed, but then sprinted away into the night. “I was screaming, ‘Somebody stop him!’” Karim says.

It was only when the man was gone that Karim realized he was bleeding—from his neck, his shoulder, his back, his face. Soon, he and his girlfriend, who had a deep gash on her leg, collapsed on the pavement, where they stayed until the neighbors called an ambulance.

It was their first day in their new home.

Some three months later, local authorities have turned their investigation over to the FBI. The suspected attacker, Wasil Farooqui, is in custody, and was scheduled to undergo a psychiatric evaluation, but CBS News and CNN reported that the FBI had been tracking Farooqui for possible ties to radicalism; a spokeswoman for the bureau declined to comment to *Newsweek*, citing the ongoing investigation.

Either way, there’s an upside for Karim, a Muslim immigrant with a temporary work status. While millions of immigrants fear deportation under President-elect Donald Trump, the assault may make him eligible for a long-term visa—and save him from having to return to his native Bangladesh, a country he hardly remembers. The only catch: There’s a really long waiting list.

10,000 VICTIMS

Once an undocumented immigrant, Karim came to the U.S. with his parents at age 5 and grew up in New York City, where his father worked as a dishwasher and sold books on the sidewalk. As a boy, Karim used to go to Yankee Stadium with his uncle, eating hot dogs and watching Yankees star first-baseman Don Mattingly. It wasn’t until high school that he learned what it really meant to be undocumented. “I was looking toward my future,” he says. “[But] I couldn’t get a job. I couldn’t do anything for myself.”

He was finally able to get a job at Dunkin’ Donuts, and the money he saved helped him pay for college. He considered a career in law, but his immigration status made that dream seem impossible, since he technically wasn’t allowed to work. He graduated from John Jay College in 2009 with a degree in psychology. He says he “was just hoping something comes along” to help him get documented and start a career.

Three years later, something did come along. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security

BY
MAX KUTNER
@maxkutner





+
SAVED BY THE BLADE: In August, Rezai Karim was attacked by a man with a knife. But the assault may make him eligible for a long-term visa and prevent him from being deported.

announced it would start a program called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which said certain immigrants who arrived in the U.S. before they turned 16, and were younger than 31 at that time could apply for work authorization. The status would also prevent them from being deported.

Immigration reform advocates praise the program. But not enthusiastically. That's because DACA status lasts just two years before it must be renewed, and it doesn't lead to citizenship or even lawful permanent residence status. "It's tantamount to a Band-Aid because it doesn't give them a path to a green card," says Michael Wildes, Karim's immigration lawyer, who has also represented celebrities such as Gisele Bündchen, Boy George and Melania Trump.

—
“ALLAHU AKBAR!” HE SHOUTED, THEN SLASHED THEM WITH A BUTCHER’S KNIFE.

“DACA...is not really giving closure to these young souls,” he says. “They have no accents. They know from no other flag.”

Since 2012, 820,000 people have received deferment under DACA, according to the most recent numbers available. The renewal process is costly (\$465), and the window for renewal is

short: between four and five months before the expiration date. DACA's future is also precarious. Obama tried to expand the program in 2014, but some two dozen Republican-controlled states, and a few Democratic-controlled ones, sued the federal government to block it.

Now the program is in even more jeopardy; Trump has called DACA, "illegal and unconstitutional." "DACA has become a political ploy," Wildes says, "and unfortunately it renders this entire community vulnerable" by granting people rights and then threatening to take them away.

Yet registering with the program has made Karim's life better. Thanks in part to DACA, he found work as a software engineer. He moved to Roanoke for the new job, to start a new life

with his girlfriend, whom Wildes asked *Newsweek* not name in this article. Then, as Karim was reapplying for his DACA work authorization, the attack occurred.

Because of the assault, however, Karim is now eligible for something far better than DACA. It's called a U visa, and since 2000, it's been available to victims of certain crimes, such as abduction, blackmail, prostitution and torture, if they help law enforcement during the investigation of that crime. Family members of victims are eligible too. The visa is valid for four years and can be extended. For a crime victim to receive one, a local law enforcement official must confirm that the person is helping in the investigation. Up to 10,000 victims can get them each year, along

DREAM DEFERRED: Since the Obama administration created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, some 820,000 people have enrolled in it. But Donald Trump may do away with DACA.

RON SACHS/SIPA/AP



with an unlimited number of family members.

The downside: According to the latest figures, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services received 29,661 U visa petitions between January and June of this year and approved only 1,274 of them. Last fiscal year, the agency received 52,666 and approved 17,694. As of June, the waitlist was 135,641 petitions, more than six times what it was in 2009. Some immigrants are shipped back to their birth countries as a result of the long wait. “I’ve seen cases where someone who is U visa eligible, their deportation is actually executed even though they’re in line waiting for USCIS to process the visa,” says Clara Long, an immigration researcher at Human Rights Watch, a nonprofit.

Yet U visa holders can apply for a green card and permanent residency, and eventually citizenship, unlike those enrolled in DACA. Even better: It would take more than a new executive action to overturn the U visa law.

‘REMOVED FROM AMERICA’

The U visa program was designed partly to build trust between law enforcement and immigrants, who reform advocates say are often afraid to dial 911 for fear of entering the system. Many have real reasons to worry; since the mid-1990s, laws have given local cops the authority to enforce federal immigration rules. The Priority Enforcement Program, for example, asks local law enforcement to share the fingerprints of the people it books with immigration officials. Such programs, originally meant to target gang members and terrorists, says Muzaffar Chishti, director of the Migration Policy Institute’s office at the New York University School of Law, “became a rather convenient instrument for local police to put garden-variety unauthorized people in immigration proceedings.” Thanks to these programs, he adds, “it was no longer [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] people running around the streets of Georgia. The funnel was coming from the local criminal justice system.”

Today, many immigrants fear that any encounter with police could lead to deportation. In 2013, the Department of Urban Planning and Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago reported that 44 percent of Latinos surveyed said they were “less likely to contact police officers if they have been the victim of a crime because they fear that police officers will use this interaction as an

opportunity to inquire into their immigration status or that of people they know.” For undocumented immigrants, the number was 70 percent. Even 28 percent of Latinos born in the U.S. said they were less likely to contact police because of immigration concerns. “If there is any kind of allegation of any kind of criminality,” Wildes says, “any one of these [immigrants] could be removed from America.”

Karim’s record is clean and he is fully cooperating with investigators as they try and figure out why he was attacked. Police apprehended Farooqui, his suspected assailant, the night of the slashing when he showed up to the hospital for the injuries he received in the struggle. He told a detective he had ambushed the couple because voices in his head told him too, according to a search warrant for the assailant’s home. A grand jury is set to consider the case in early December. Sheila Moheb, Farooqui’s lawyer,

KARIM’S IMMIGRATION LAWYER ALSO REPRESENTS CELEBRITIES SUCH AS GISELE BÜNDCHEN, BOY GEORGE AND MELANIA TRUMP.

says her client traveled to Turkey in early 2016 (she would not say why), but added he has no ties to extremist organizations and that the Roanoke incident was not a terror attack, but something “fueled by his mental illness.”

Karim is now living in a different apartment in Roanoke. His girlfriend has suffered panic attacks since the episode and is staying with his mother in New York City. The ordeal hasn’t changed how he feels about his adopted country, and he wants more than ever to protect it from people like Farooqui. “I felt that this man was a terrorist,” Karim says, “like he was there to hurt people.”

“I [don’t] want him to get away and do this again. Or do something worse.” **N**

CUDDLING WITH CAIRO

Why the bromance between Donald Trump and Egypt's Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi might not last

THE LIFE-SIZE cutout of Hillary Clinton looked lonely. On November 8, at the U.S. Embassy's presidential election night bash in Cairo, dozens of young Egyptians gathered in a cavernous hotel ballroom to pose with a cardboard effigy of Clinton's opponent, Donald Trump. Despite the New York mogul's call for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States, Trump is popular here, at least among government supporters. So when the *Apprentice* star swept the American heartland for a shocking victory, many in the Egyptian capital cheered the result.

Among them: President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, the first foreign leader to congratulate Trump. His budding bromance with the Donald stands in contrast to his relationship with outgoing President Barack Obama, whom he's viewed with distrust since Washington briefly suspended military aid following the 2013 coup that brought el-Sissi to power. Egyptian authorities have since moved closer to Russia, holding large joint military drills and perhaps securing funds from Vladimir Putin for the country's first nuclear power plant.

Many expect el-Sissi and Trump to bond over their mutual antipathy toward "radical Islam"—and a shared preference for strongman politics. But Egyptian-American affairs have long been characterized by wild swings, from extended periods of cooperation to swift ruptures. And with Trump's inexperience and el-Sissi's intolerance of unsolicited advice or criticism, few

expect the relationship between Washington and Cairo to remain copacetic.

That relationship began in earnest soon after the end of the American Civil War, when a young soldier and adventurer named Thaddeus Mott wrangled an introduction to the Egyptian ruler, Khedive Ismail. The monarch in Cairo was eager to build up his armed forces so he could thwart Europe's colonial ambitions and kick out the Ottomans, who had controlled Egypt for over 300 years. Sensing a moneymaking opportunity, Mott convinced Ismail to hire dozens of Civil War veterans as military advisers in 1869. "Ismail wanted to upgrade the army; to upgrade his country," says Mahmoud Sabit, a Cairo-based historian and descendant of Ismail's then-minister of war. "And what better way than to turn to anti-imperial troops that had just emerged from the most modern war?"

The first batch of what would ultimately be a force of around 50 Americans sailed across the Atlantic. Most were ex-Confederates, unhappy with life after the war. Following their defeat, many Southerners were barred from serving in the U.S. Army. But by blocking the European powers and saving Egypt from Ottoman control, some felt they'd be restoring a lost sense of pride. There were also a few Northerners, most of whom oversaw their Confederate counterparts, and they too had struggled to adjust to civilian life.

To Ismail, the Egyptian ruler, all that mattered

BY
**PETER
 SCHWARTZSTEIN**
 @PSchwartzstein



+
PYRAMID SCHEME:
 In recent years,
 Egypt's el-Sissi has
 moved closer to
 Russia because he
 views his Ameri-
 can counterpart,
 Barack Obama,
 with distrust.

was the Americans' military know-how and technical skills (building pontoon bridges, digging wells and laying railroads). In the beginning, the Americans proved worthy of their handsome salaries. General William "Old Blizzards" Loring, a career soldier who'd lost an arm in the Mexican-American War, was entrusted with revamping northern Egypt's coastal defenses. He did such a good job that his fortifications outside Alexandria held firm through several later bombardments by the British.

But Ismail's grand state-building plan came at a steep cost, and as he ran into financial troubles, tensions and culture differences emerged. One American, James Morris Morgan, was expelled from Egypt for making what was deemed an inappropriate approach to Ismail's daughter. The end finally came when the Egyptian ruler launched an ill-conceived assault into Ethiopia, to extract resources and exact revenge for a humiliating defeat the previous year. But this expedition failed, due to poor leadership and infighting among the officer corps. The Egyptians blamed Old Blizzards, who had been appointed as joint second-in-command, and the rest of the U.S. soldiers were marred by association.

Yet the Civil War vets left an impressive mark on Egypt, from scouting out a location for a key lighthouse at the mouth of the Red Sea to identifying Aswan as the best spot on the Nile for a future dam. But with the British invasion of Egypt in 1882, much of the progress they made was hastily undone. The new overlords shrank the country's army and dispersed Egyptian officers with their newly acquired technical skills. For the

next 70 years, the country lived under the kind of foreign domination that the Confederates and their Union counterparts had sworn to resist.

Decades later, in the early days of the Cold War, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower courted Egyptian strongman Gamal Abdel Nasser in hopes of checking the spread of socialism. But America's refusal to pay for Egypt's Aswan High Dam, among other things, led Nasser to embrace the Soviets instead. That alliance lasted for two decades, until the late 1970s, when the U.S. brokered the Camp David Accords, sealing a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. The agreement led to many U.S. army instructors returning, and since the late 1940s, Washington has provided almost \$80 billion in military aid to Egypt.

During the '80s, '90s and 2000s, the two countries were bound by shared interests, from peace in Sinai to the free passage of oil through the Suez Canal, and the U.S. government's belief that ignoring Cairo's unsavory human rights record was worth maintaining order in the most populous country in the Arab world. But when Hosni Mubarak's 30-year presidency began to unravel in the early days of the Arab Spring, the Obama administration backed the revolutionaries and called for Egypt's elderly dictator to step down. Since 2011, Egypt has

MANY EXPECT EL-SISSI AND TRUMP TO BOND OVER THEIR MUTUAL ANTI-PATHY TOWARD "RADICAL ISLAM" AND A PREFERENCE FOR STRONGMAN POLITICS.

bounded from military control to an Islamist president and now back to a former field marshal, with each ruler warily eyeing his erstwhile partner across the Atlantic.

Now as Trump prepares to work with el-Sissi ("He's a fantastic guy," the real estate mogul said when they met on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly session in September), he and his advisers would do well to remember how quickly Cairo turned on the ex-Confederate soldiers. Nearly 150 years later, Loring's experience is a cautionary reminder. **■**

NO PAPER TIGERS

The U.S. government wants to know if bitcoin and other virtual currencies are a threat to national security

ON A MOUNTAINOUS stretch along the Orange River between South Africa and Namibia lies a small town called Orania, a homeland founded in the 1990s by white nationalists who introduced their own currency, the ora—probably the only tender in the world created exclusively for whites.

The ora, paper money pegged to the South African rand, is one of hundreds of alternative currencies issued for mainly political reasons, but many of the newer currencies are increasingly virtual—digital representations of money consisting of nothing more than computer code. Most prominent among them: bitcoin, which, like conventional currency, can be traded online, transferred, stored or exchanged for cash. But, unlike conventional currency, it lives primarily on the internet, secured by layers of computer code.

This suits bitcoin users just fine. They want a secure way to exchange money by laptop, mobile phone or email. Yet so do terrorists and criminals, whom the U.S. government worries might develop and deploy their own uncrackable virtual currencies. *Newsweek* has learned hundreds of experts inside the nation's defense and intelligence agencies, as well as private-sector researchers in finance, technology and various think tanks across the country—some of them under contract with the U.S. government—are now investigating how virtual currencies could undermine America's long-standing ability to

disrupt the financial networks of its foes and even permanently upend parts of the global financial system.

“There is a real danger and a challenge here with respect to virtual currencies,” says Juan Zarate, a senior adviser at Washington think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies and on the board of advisers for San Francisco's Coinbase, one of the most popular virtual currency exchanges in the world. “And it runs contrary to the very fundamentals of the transparency and accountability that we've tried to build for the last three decades to tackle terrorism, human trafficking, money-laundering and many other types of criminal activity.”

In 2003, Zarate led an elite team at the U.S. Department of the Treasury who engineered the model used today to target, block and freeze the finances of America's enemies through their personal bank accounts—from Iranian money launderers to cronies of Russian President Vladimir Putin. This is how it works: Treasury's Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes puts individuals and organizations on a blacklist, which is sent out to the world. Once on the blacklist, those targeted can no longer do business in U.S. dollars, which are involved in roughly 88 percent of the world's foreign-exchange transactions, according to Switzerland's Bank for International Settlements. In other words, they cannot bank at most financial institutions.



BY
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This ability to financially disrupt, disable and dismantle nefarious networks is crucial to U.S. national security, Treasury officials say. It has proven effective for more than a decade and is often preferable to deploying troops. “We have made it very difficult for members of the Islamic State to raise or move money around the world these days,” Zarate says. “Even Iran had a hard time finding safe havens.” In fact, years of financial pressure from the U.S. and its allies helped force Iran to negotiate with the White House and sign a landmark nuclear deal last year.

The biggest concern the U.S. has about virtual currencies, Zarate says, is that terrorists and other enemies might create one so powerful and so untrackable, they’ll no longer need the global banking system, which the U.S. uses to financially starve them. This has yet to happen, but America’s defense and intelligence agencies are already trying to figure out how they might infiltrate or block such a malicious financial network.

MONEY PROBLEMS:
Some fear virtual currencies could hinder America’s ability to disrupt the financial networks of its foes and even upend parts of the global financial system.

GEORGE FREY/GETTY



Joshua Baron, an academic cryptographer and mathematician for the Rand Corp., one of the think tanks working with the U.S. government, published the first major research paper examining these issues late last year. (The paper was put out by Rand National Defense Research

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“WE HAVE MADE IT VERY DIFFICULT FOR MEMBERS OF THE ISLAMIC STATE TO RAISE OR MOVE MONEY AROUND THE WORLD.”
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Institute, a federally funded entity sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, the Navy, the Marine Corps and the defense intelligence community.) Baron found that America’s enemies appear to have far more access in recent years to the kinds of advanced technology and encryption tools that would allow them to potentially design a virtual currency that could circumnavigate the global financial system. “We are seeing a trend toward increasingly sophisticated cyberservices being put into the hands of unsophisticated players,” he says. And while this may be handy for privacy-savvy Americans, it can make it much harder for the government and law enforcement to fight terrorists and criminals, he says.

So, is there any evidence that America’s foes have tried to create one of these nightmare virtual currencies yet? “Not that we found,” says Baron, who plans to release further research on this subject in the coming months. “But we are looking at ways for the government to disrupt any new virtual currencies that might be designed and deployed by terrorists, non-state actors or insurgents for everyday use.”

Rand’s research into the dangers of virtual currencies is not meant as an attack on bitcoin, Baron said. He believes the currency’s publicly visible ledger of transactions is too transparent to attract terrorists, criminals or enemies of the state. “I do not see bitcoin as the go-to currency for terrorists,” he says. “As it stands, it does not offer enough anonymity.”

But that doesn’t mean terrorists don’t use it. In late August, Yaya Fanusie, a former counterterrorism analyst for the CIA, flagged the first verifiable instance of a terrorist organization



trying to raise funds through bitcoin. The Ibn Taymiyyah Media Center, an online jihadist propaganda organization based in the Gaza Strip, wasn't raising very much money, notes Fanusie, now the director of analysis for the Center on Sanctions and Illicit Finance at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. But, he adds, "this effort shows how terrorists are experimenting with new financial technology to expand funding."

The implications of bitcoin and potentially more threatening copycat virtual currencies go well beyond terrorism. Bitcoin's unique and widely accessible technology challenges the very bedrock of the global banking system. Blockchain, the digital record-keeping apparatus at the heart of the cryptocurrency, is used to generate, circulate and track bitcoins through computers within a global network that not only verify and record every transaction, but also check each other's work. This decentralized way of doing business also can be used for countless other applications, prompting an estimated \$1 billion of investments in the technology in 2016. Stock exchanges like Nasdaq and financial firms like Visa, for instance, are experimenting with Blockchain technology to replace slower, more expensive third-party record-keeping systems.

"With the introduction of Blockchain, a disruption of the global banking system is inevitable," says Bala Venkataraman, global chief technology officer of banking and capital markets for Computer Sciences Corp., a digital information-technology company whose sister firm, CSRA Inc., runs the IT backbone of the National Security Agency (NSA).

Computer Sciences has hired hundreds of technologists and experts across the banking, insurance and health care sectors to examine how to "scale up" Blockchain technology for faster banking, trading, clearing and settlements, Bala says. "In a cryptocurrency world, you know who becomes the bank?" he asks.

"You and I. You become not just the bank, but the central bank. And that can have enormous ramifications for things like sovereign authority. By 2040, I think we may be fully transitioned over to cryptocurrency. I don't think anyone can stop it from happening."

Meanwhile, CSRA, which also works closely the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, confirmed to *Newsweek* that it has been surveilling the progress of bitcoin since its early development for the U.S. government, but declined to comment further. (The NSA and DHS declined to comment as well.) A post on the website of Computer Sciences, which has some top brass that overlaps with CSRA, offers a glimpse of how the former views bitcoin. Noting that global digital payments outstripped paper-based payments for the first time in 2014, led in part by millennials and the increased use of virtual currencies, it refers to bitcoin as a revolutionary innovation that's "breathtaking in its ambition," and striking for its "attempt to overthrow a sovereign authority."

For now, Treasury officials at the Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network say they are taking a do-no-harm approach to

"WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF BLOCKCHAIN, A DISRUPTION OF THE GLOBAL BANKING SYSTEM IS INEVITABLE."

currencies like bitcoin by carefully regulating and monitoring them, but also allowing them to evolve. As one Treasury official notes, bitcoin has yet to reach the kind of scale that would remotely begin to rival the U.S. dollar. The busiest week on record for the cryptocurrency, which occurred late this year, the official said, came to \$2 million, compared with \$14 trillion of average daily U.S. dollar transactions.

Yet like Orania, bitcoin was created for political reasons—in this case, as a challenge to the global banking system. The virtual currency, launched at the height of the Great Recession, appeared with a newspaper headline carefully tucked into its genesis block, the currency's cornerstone hunk of code. Taken from a January 2009 story in *The Times* of London, it reads: "Chancellor on brink of second bailout for banks." **N**



KAVALAN CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF TAIWAN WHISKY

IN A SILENT, dimly lit inner vault at Kavalan Distillery, gallons of world-class whisky sleeps among American oak casks stacked five storeys high.

The newest addition to the slumbering whiskies has been aged for five years in heavily charred Caribbean rum casks, used before to make the darkest of high-grade rum.

According to Kavalan CEO Mr YT Lee the complexity of the inaugural Kavalan Gran Reserva Rum Cask honours rum's history and is a nod to the 'rum revival' currently sweeping the spirits industry.

Rum has a colourful past. Made from the fermented juice of cane sugar or molasses, it has fueled economies and revolutions. From the 1500s in the Caribbean through to the 1800s in North America, it was traded and fought over by the British, Dutch, French and Spanish as aggressively as gold, sugar or spices ever were.

"Rum Cask soaks up all the delicious spices and aromas of the specially selected rum casks, to make an exceptionally rich and flavoursome

whisky with notes of melon and papaya, clove, and root ginger," Mr Lee said.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

THE KAVALAN Second Distillery and Second Maturation Warehouse, twin pieces in Kavalan's anniversary expansion program, were officially inaugurated at Kavalan's birthday this month.

Dr Jim Swan, Kavalan's chief consultant, poured the first drop of new make from the Second Distillery, together with Kavalan CEO Mr YT Lee, his father, Mr TT Lee, and Master Blender Ian Chang.

The four performed the same ceremony a decade ago at the commissioning of the first distillery, after a record-breaking nine months' construction. But back in 2006 things were a little different.

DREAM TO REALITY

MAKING WHISKY in Taiwan had been a figment of the Lees' imagination right up to March 11, 2006, when homemade whisky actually flowed for the first time in Taiwan.

The problem had been how to make world-class whisky in a hot, humid climate with average temperatures of 33 degrees Celsius.

Ten years on, Kavalan can point to the accumulation of more than 211 gold or higher medals, two prestigious World of Whiskies Awards (WWA) for the "Best Single Malt" and "Best Single Cask" whiskies in the world, and the coveted title of IWSC "Producer of the Year" five times.

In the words of outgoing International Wine and Spirit Competition (IWSC) managing director Ewan Lacey, Kavalan has contributed to a "broadening of the world of whisky both in terms of creating a new frontier and a new philosophy."

CHANGING TIMES

YET IT WASN'T until 2010 that Kavalan exited obscurity to make its entrance on the world stage. The occasion was a Times of London 2010 blind tasting in Scotland to commemorate Scottish poet Robbie Burns.

The event ended up being remembered for something a lot more Asian. Kavalan trounced the competition – two Scotches and an English whiskey – to the bewilderment of everyone assembled.

The Times' Scottish reporter who famously recorded chairman Charles MacLean on the result gasping: "Oh. My God." traveled to Taiwan for the anniversary this year to report on Kavalan a second time.

EXPANSIONARY DESIGNS

AS MR LEE contemplates the next 10 years, he knows the twin forces of his Second Distillery and the Second Maturation Warehouse completed for the anniversary, hold the key to Kavalan's next phase. They double Kavalan's annual production to 10 million bottles.

In the gleaming new distillery, five sets of huge lantern-shaped copper stills from legendary whisky stills maker Forsyths are polished so flawlessly that they reflect like mirrors the vast white vault and the floor-to-ceiling windows they are set against.

For those drinkers around the world who have found it hard to acquire a Kavalan, the distillery's possible elevation to one of the 10 biggest malt whisky distillers in the world will come as welcome news. ■



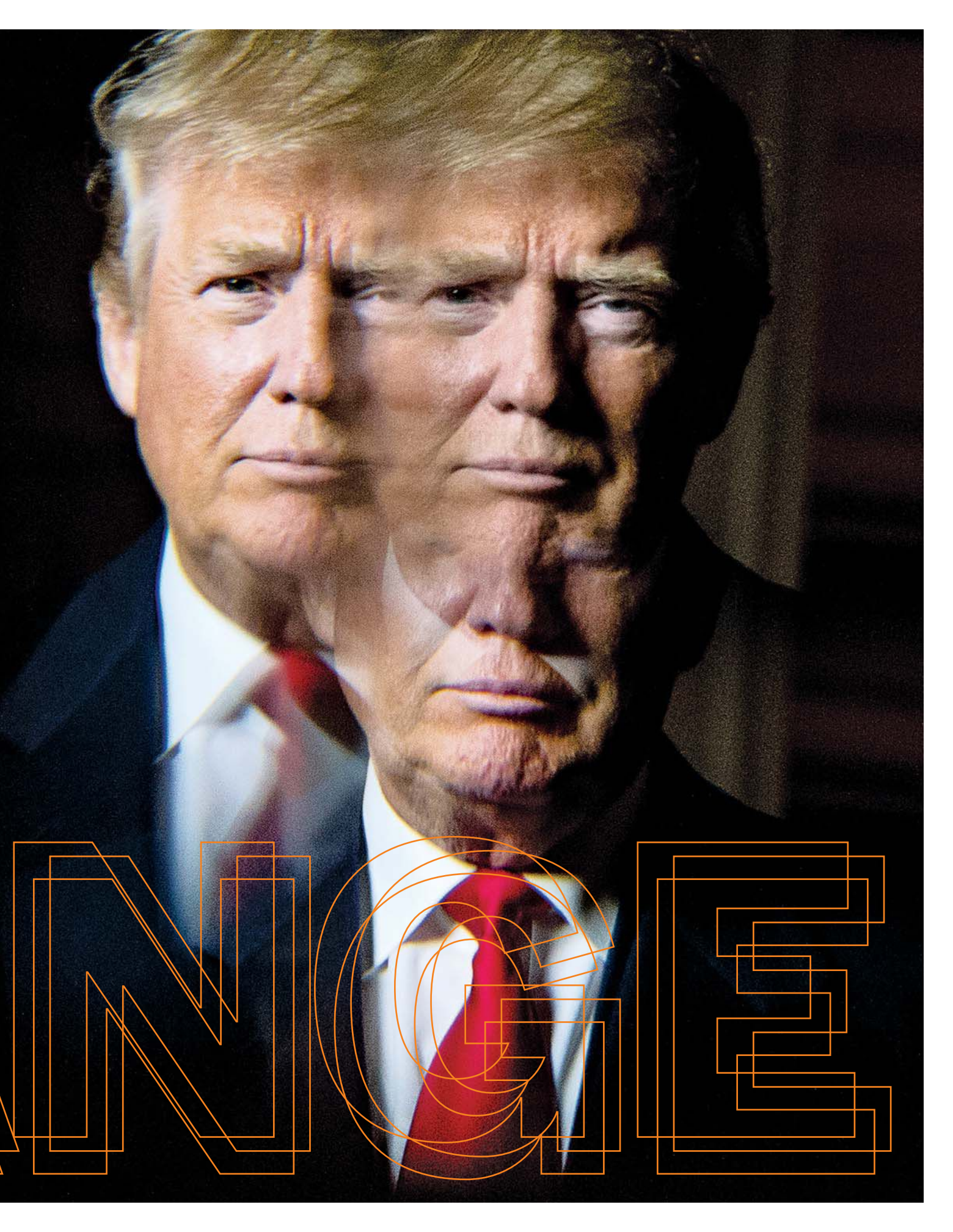
DONALD TRUMP'S

MANY BUSINESS TIES ABROAD ARE
ALREADY JEOPARDIZING THE INTERESTS
OF THE UNITED STATES AND MAKING
THE PRESIDENT-ELECT VULNERABLE TO
BRIBERY AND BLACKMAIL

TANGLED UP IN

BY KURT EICHENWALD





DONALD TRUMP HASN'T BEEN SWORN IN YET, BUT HE IS ALREADY MAKING DECISIONS AND ISSUING STATEMENTS TO WORLD LEADERS THAT RADICALLY DEPART FROM AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, ALL TO THE BENEFIT OF HIS FAMILY'S CORPORATE EMPIRE.

Because of this, the next president of the United States is already vulnerable to undue influence by other nations, including through bribery and even blackmail.

Given the vast scope of the clashes between the Trumps' extensive business dealings and the interests of America, the president-elect vowed during the campaign to eliminate potential conflicts by severing ties to his company—yet, with only weeks to go until he takes the oath of office, he hasn't laid out a credible plan. Trump's sole suggestion to date—a “blind trust” run by his children—would not eliminate the conflicts, given that the money generated would still go to his family. Moreover, such a trust would be anything but blind: If Trump Tower Moscow goes under construction, Trump will see it while in Russia and know that his kids are making millions of dollars from it. That is why foreign leaders hoping to curry favor will do everything they can to help Trump's family erect more buildings, sell more jewelry and make money through any means possible. Even if the family steps away from its company while Trump is president, every nation on Earth will know that doing business with the Trump Organization will one day benefit the family. The only way to eliminate the conflicts—sell the company, divvy up the proceeds—has been rejected by Trump, whose transition team refused to respond to any questions from *Newsweek* for this article.

Some of the most egregious conflicts that have emerged involve countries in Asia and its sub-regions, particularly the Philippines. Global policy on the Philippines has been fraught with tension since the election in May of Rodrigo Duterte as the country's president. Duterte, who boasted to voters during the campaign that he had shot a fellow law school student for teasing him, has championed the murder of suspected criminals and street children by vigilante death squads. In 2015, he said that if he became president, up to 100,000 people suspected of links to illegal drugs could be killed. Just months after his election, Duterte said he was eager to lead a genocide of up to 3 million drug addicts. “I'd be happy to slaughter them,” he said. “At least if Germany had Hitler, the Philippines would have [me].” And in September, an admitted hit man testified to a Senate committee in the Philippines that Duterte presided over

a murder campaign when he was mayor of Davao City.

As president, Duterte rapidly showed he was little concerned with the legal protections afforded to Filipinos suspected of crimes. During his first three months in office, 850 Filipinos were murdered by death squads, apparently on little more than the suspicion that they were drug users and dealers. Since then, the estimated death toll has climbed to 4,500. The carnage has been condemned throughout the Western world; the Parliament of the European Union and two United Nations human rights experts have urged Duterte to end the massacre. One of the experts even appeared to suggest that Duterte and his government could be held legally accountable for committing mass murder in violation of international law. “Claims to fight illicit drug trade do not absolve the government from its international legal obligations and do not shield state actors or others from responsibility for illegal killings,” said Agnes Callamard, the U.N. special rapporteur on summary executions. In response to the denunciations, Duterte lashed out at the United States, threatening to align his country more with China.

Despite universal condemnation of the ongoing slaughter of Filipinos, Trump signaled his approval of Duterte's policies during a phone call on Decem-

EVERY NATION ON EARTH KNOWS DOING BUSINESS WITH THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION WILL ONE DAY BENEFIT THE FAMILY.

ber 2. According to Duterte—an account that has gone uncontested by Trump—the president-elect endorsed his tactics as “the right way.” Duterte added: “[Trump] was wishing me success in my campaign against the drug problem.” (He also said Trump invited him to the White House, a courtesy not yet extended to Theresa May, the prime minister of Britain, America's most important strategic ally.)

The Trump transition team did not respond to *Newsweek* when asked if the president-elect had intended to signal his approval of the carnage in the Philippines; did not believe the conclusions of the U.N. and West-

ern nations that Duterte ordered the killings; or simply did not understand the magnitude of his comments. One thing, however, is clear: The Trump family has an enormous financial interest in keeping Duterte happy. Trump Tower at Century City in Makati, Philippines, is on the verge of completion, with potential buyers having placed deposits on at least 94 percent of the condominiums, according to Century Properties, the Trump Organization's business partner there. During the U.S. presidential campaign, Trump's sons Donald Jr. and Eric traveled to Makati to shovel some dirt in a ceremony to celebrate the structural completion of the building; a photograph of the two men shoveling alongside top Century Properties executives was posted on the building's website. (On that same website, a line of jewelry by Trump's daughter Ivanka is offered for sale, and it is expected to be available for purchase at the \$150 million property.) As with almost every property with Trump's name on it built over the past decade, his

WHITE HOUSE FOR SALE? Trump claims putting his company in a blind trust will make all his conflicts of interest disappear, but only a blind person could fail to see the Trump logo on every new building that goes up.

+

company is not the developer; it merely sold its name to Century Properties to use on the building. Although details of the transaction are not public, contracts for other Trump branding deals reviewed by *Newsweek* show that they require a multimillion-dollar up-front payment as well as up to 25 percent of the developer's revenue, year after year. So, under the deal, Trump's children will be paid millions of dollars throughout their father's presidency by Jose E.B. Antonio, the head of Century Properties.

Duterte recently named Antonio the special government envoy to the United States. The conflicts here could not be more troubling nor more blatant: President Trump will be discussing U.S. policy in Southeast Asia with one of his (or his children's) business partners, a man who is the official representative of a foreign leader who likens himself to Hitler. Also note that the Trump family has an enormous financial interest in Duterte's murderous campaign: Rooting out crime in the Philippines is good for the real estate values.

The Trump family's dealings in the Philippines will set off a constitutional crisis on the first day of Trump's



presidency, if anyone in the federal government decides to abide by the law. There is serious debate as to whether Trump will be violating the Constitution's Emoluments Clause—which prohibits office holders from accepting gifts from foreign states—since the majority of his company's business is with other corporations and developers. That is not the case in the Philippines. The man writing millions of dollars' worth of checks to the Trump family is the Duterte government's special representative to the United States. To argue that these payments will be constitutional if they are paid to the Trump children, and not to Trump personally, is absurd. This conflict demands congressional hearings, and could be an impeachable offense.

This unyielding principle that foreign powers cannot be allowed to hold sway over a president dates back to the Founding Fathers. In *Federalist 68*, Alexander Hamilton wrote of the dangers of such a scenario. "Nothing was more to be desired than that every practicable obstacle should be opposed to cabal, intrigue, and corruption," he wrote in reference to the powers bestowed in the Constitution. "These most deadly adversaries of republican government might naturally have been expected to make their approaches from more than one quarter, but chiefly from the desire in foreign powers to gain an improper ascendant in our councils."

Trump's conflicts of interest in the Philippines cannot be resolved so long as anyone in his family has an interest in the building there. Even if his business partner, Antonio, is removed as Duterte's special envoy, Trump won't simply forget that the Makati building exists, that the authoritarian Philippine president has the power to damage the Trump family's financial interests there and that the protection of what is now a high-profile target for terrorist attacks is in Duterte's hands. (In the past

three years, there have been nine strikes in the Philippines. The most recent, in September, was a bombing that killed 15 people and injured 70; in response, Duterte declared that the country was in a "state of lawlessness" and ordered police and the military to search all cars and citizens at checkpoints.)

The result of all this is that Duterte has extraordinary leverage against Trump, and no one will know what impact that might have on the future president's decision-making. For example, will Trump ignore the promises he made during the campaign on immigration when it comes to the Philippines, given the devastating impact it could have on the economy there?

A report by the research division of Nomura Securities concluded that, under Trump's declared policies,

THE TRUMP FAMILY HAS AN ENORMOUS FINANCIAL INTEREST IN THE MURDEROUS CAMPAIGN UNDER DUTERTE: ROOTING OUT CRIME IN THE PHILIPPINES IS GOOD FOR ITS REAL ESTATE VALUES.

"the Philippines' economy stands to lose the most" of all countries in Southeast Asia. And because many Filipino guest laborers in the United States are undocumented, the report said that a tightening of immigration policies could lead to fewer migrant workers from that country. "This could impact remittances inflows back to the Philippines," the report says. "The U.S. is host to 34.5 percent of the total overseas Filipino population, and we estimate accounts for about 31 percent of total worker remittances." According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, remittances from the United States totaled almost \$6 billion in the first seven months of 2016. Translation: Under Trump's immigration policies, huge supports for the Filipino economy could collapse. On November 15, Moody's announced that Trump's policies would negatively affect the Philippines's credit rating, which could thwart Duterte from keeping his campaign promises of tax cuts and greater spending on infrastructure. Duterte could easily punish Trump for undermining his domestic agenda in the Philippines by taking actions against the family's business interests. And Trump knows that anything he does to alienate Duterte or harm the Philippine economy could threaten his family's wealth.

FOLLOW THE FALLING DOMINOES

TRUMP ALSO has serious conflicts of interest regarding China. Part of this, once again, traces from the Phil-

+
THEY'VE GOT THE DIRT: During the election campaign, Trump's two sons flew to the Philippines to toss some ceremonial sod to celebrate the near completion of a Trump Tower in Makati.



FROM LEFT: TRUMP TOWER PHILIPPINES; ZEKE JACOBS/SIPA/AP



+ GOOD FOR BUSINESS: Philippine President Duterte, who is pushing a brutal campaign of murder against drug dealers and users in his country, believes Trump endorses his strategy as “the right way.”

ippines. Trump has vowed to label China a “currency manipulator” that artificially drives down the value of the renminbi, which would make Chinese goods cheaper to import. That would allow the United States to impose duties on Chinese imports to offset any currency manipulation.

China is one of the top two export destinations for the Philippines, with about 55 percent of that trade coming from the electronics business, according to the Philippines Statistics Authority. China then uses a large portion of those Philippines imports for the manufacture of products sold to the United States. Like an international trade version of toppling dominoes, American rules that decrease imports into the United States will, in turn, slam the largest Philippines export business, roiling that country’s economy. The last domino hits Trump Tower at Century City: The global property consultancy ser-

vices company CB Richard Ellis has attributed increased demand for luxury condominiums in the Philippines to the country’s growing economy. Impose duties on Chinese imports to America today and Trump Tower in the Philippines could fall into bankruptcy soon after, costing the president’s children millions of dollars.

So if Trump reverses his promise to have China declared a currency manipulator on day one of his presidency, would it be because someone explained to him that the renminbi has been going up in value over the past 12 months or because he now sees the possibly dire implications to the American economy from a trade war with China? Or would it be because he wants his kids’ business in the Philippines to prosper? No one but Donald Trump will ever know the truth.

There’s a similarly disturbing conundrum in Taiwan. On December 2, Trump—with no consultation with State Department specialists on the delicate relations between American and China—upended almost 40 years of U.S. policy by taking a phone call from the

president of Taiwan, which broke away from the mainland in 1949. The question of whether Taiwan is an independent country or part of China proved to be a major diplomatic challenge after U.S. President Richard Nixon normalized relations with China. To avoid conflict, the United States adopted what is called the “One China” policy, under which the U.S. maintains unofficial relations with Taiwan but does not consider it to be its own country. Because America does not recognize Taiwan as its own political entity, all American leaders since Ronald Reagan have refused to speak to its president. This month, Trump pushed his position even further, saying he saw no reason to be bound by the One China policy that has smoothed Sino-American relations and instead advocating using it as a bargaining chip in trade and other negotiations.

If Trump wanted to reverse decades of policy followed by both Republican and Democratic presidents, he should have waited until after his inauguration; presidents-elect are not supposed to interfere in foreign policy.

Why did he do not wait? Only Trump knows, but allegations have already emerged that the decision

ROOM SERVICE: Foreign governments and lobbyists have rushed to book rooms at the new Trump International Hotel in D.C., expecting to curry favor with the president-elect.

may have been influenced by his family’s financial interests. Cheng Wen-tsan, mayor of Taoyuan, Taiwan, told *The China Times* that a representative from Trump’s company named Chen Siting, who is also known as Charlyne Chen, had visited to express the family’s interest in building a hotel near the city’s airport. According to the mayor, Chen also said that Eric Trump would be visiting the island by the end of the year. Since that report, the Trump Organization has stated that no trips to Taiwan were authorized for the hotels division and that no conversations were underway about such a project. However, on November 24, Chen told Formosa Television that she had assisted the Trump Organization in the past to sell some of its properties in Las Vegas to buyers in Taiwan and Shanghai. As first reported in *The New York Times*, Anne-Marie Donoghue, who identifies herself on her Facebook page as a Trump Hotels Asia sales director, posted a photo from a visit to Taiwan in October, which she described as a “work trip”; this was one month after the mayor of Taoyuan said he met with Chen.

Finally, there is the question of whether the Trump Organization will attempt any deals in China during the next four years. In 2011, Eric Trump publicly stated that the family company planned to expand its brand into China after the completion of the Manila project.





That building is almost finished, meaning the Chinese could well be expecting contacts from the Trump family soon. What Trump and his transition team don't seem to understand is that it does not matter whether Siting's trip was authorized, whether Donoghue was in attendance, whether there are discussions going on now or whether contracts are about to be signed. Just the suspicion that Trump might re-establish formal relations with Taiwan for the financial benefit of his children—or might use it as a bargaining chip for landing the kind of development deals on the mainland that Eric Trump discussed—will now be part of the foreign policy calculations in Beijing, as officials there attempt to deal with the new U.S. president.

EXTRADITION SWAP?

THE CONFLICTS between the commercial interests of the Trump family and U.S. foreign policy extend beyond the many financial benefits for the next president and his children. Already, there is a situation where the president of the United States could be blackmailed by a foreign power through pressure related to his family's business entanglements.

In 2008, the Trump Organization struck a multi-million-dollar branding deal with the Dogan Group, a large corporation named after its influential family, for a two-tower complex in Istanbul. In 2012, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan presided over the opening ceremonies and met with Trump. But in June of this year, Erdogan called for the Trump name to be removed from the complex because of his anti-Muslim rhetoric; the Turkish president also said presiding over the dedication had been a terrible mistake. Erdogan later told associates he intended to impede America's use of a critical Air Force base in Turkey should Trump win the presidency, a Middle Eastern financier with contacts inside the Turkish government told *Newsweek*. The financier spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid jeopardizing relations with his official contacts.

In July, members of the Turkish military attempted a coup. Erdogan crushed the plotters, and his government

+ **TWO-FACED CHINA POLICY?** Cheng, the mayor of Taoyuan, Taiwan, says a Trump representative visited her and said the company was looking to build a hotel near her airport.

has arrested more than 36,000 suspected participants and shut down 17 media outlets. The primary culprit, Erdogan declared almost immediately, was Fethullah Gülen, a 77-year-old Muslim spiritual leader who has lived in Pennsylvania's Poconos region for many years. Erdogan demanded that the Obama administration extradite Gülen to face charges related to the coup.

Gülen and Erdogan were allies until 2013, the year a series of corruption investigations erupted regarding government officials accused of engaging in a "gas for gold" scheme with Iran; Erdogan claimed the man with whom he once shared common goals was the driving force behind the inquiries, which he called an attempted "civilian coup." Erdogan has placed Gülen on country's list of most-wanted terrorists, but the Obama administration has not acted on the extradition request, and it has told the Turks they would have to produce proof of Gülen's involvement in the coup attempt before he could be sent to Ankara, the Turkish capital.

Enter Donald Trump. The day of the U.S. election, the news site *The Hill* published an article by Lieutenant General Michael T. Flynn, who has since been named as Trump's national security adviser. "The forces of radical Islam derive their ideology from radical clerics like Gülen, who is running a scam," Flynn wrote. "We should not provide him safe haven.... It is imperative that we remember who our real friends are." (Flynn, who runs a consulting firm hired by a company with links to the Turkish government, seems unaware that radical Islamic groups like the Islamic State, or ISIS, are more likely to decapitate someone like Gülen.)

That article, according to the financier with contacts in the Turkish government, led Erdogan and his asso-

ALREADY, THERE IS A SITUATION WHERE THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES COULD BE BLACK MAILED BY A FOREIGN POWER.

ciates to believe a Trump administration would not demand more evidence to justify deporting Gülen. So, almost immediately, Erdogan stopped condemning Trump and instead voiced support for him. The day after the U.S. election, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim issued a statement directly linking his country's good wishes for Trump with its desire to get Gülen back. "We congratulate Mr. Trump. I am openly calling on the new president from here about the urgent extradition of Fethullah Gülen, the mastermind, executor and perpetrator of the heinous July 15 coup attempt, who lives on U.S. soil."

In a telephone call that same day with Erdogan, Trump passed on compliments to the Turkish president from a senior official with his company's business partner on the Istanbul project, whom the president-elect was reported to have called "a close friend." The official, Mehmet Ali Yalcindag, is the son-in-law of Dogan Holding owner Aydin Dogan and was instrumental in the development of the Trump complex in Turkey. That Trump delivered messages from his business partner to Erdogan has been reported in numerous media outlets in Turkey, including some closely tied to the government, and has not been denied by Turkish officials or the Trump transition team.

According to the Middle Eastern financier with contacts in the Erdogan administration, Trump's casual praise of a member of the Dogan family prompted Erdogan to believe this relationship might give him leverage over the president-elect. In the past, Erdogan has placed enormous pressure on the Dogan Group, which owns media operations that have been critical of him, by imposing a \$2.5 billion tax fine and calling for supporters to boycott its newspapers and television stations. Then, just weeks after hearing Trump's kind words about his Dogan business partner, Erdogan lashed out at the Turkish company again.

On December 1, authorities detained Barbaros Muratogl, a 28-year veteran of Dogan who was the company's representative to Ankara. His alleged crime? Maintaining links to the movement led by Gülen, thus connecting the Dogan executive to the attempted coup. In response, Dogan shares fell 8.6 percent. (The purported evidence against Muratogl: public accusations from an editor at a newspaper owned by a company that competes with Dogan.)

Once again, follow the dominoes as they tip over. Erdogan is frustrated in his efforts to grab Gülen; Trump

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP: Erdogan believes he has leverage with Trump, who's trying to build a huge office tower in Istanbul, which makes his business partners in Turkey vulnerable to harassment or even arrest.



praises a Turkish executive who works with his business partner there, Dogan. A few weeks later, a senior Dogan executive is detained on threadbare allegations. If Erdogan's government puts more pressure on the company that's paying millions of dollars to Trump and his children, revenue flowing from the tower complex in Istanbul could be cut off. That means Erdogan has leverage with Trump, who will soon have the power to get Gülen extradited. The financier with contacts in the Turkish government explained the dynamic to *Newsweek*: "Erdogan has something he believes Trump wants, and Trump has someone Erdogan desperately wants."

WHO DARES SAY NO TO IVANKA?

WITH U.S. security and foreign policy already jeopardized by the president-elect's conflicts, a few horrifying instances of potential corruption and abuse of power seem quaint by comparison. For example, in a stunning breach of protocol, Ivanka Trump—who supposedly will be on the other side of the dividing line between the Trump businesses and the Trump

WITH U.S. SECURITY JEOPARDIZED, A FEW HORRIFYING INSTANCES OF POTENTIAL CORRUPTION AND ABUSE OF POWER SEEM QUAIN.

presidency—sat in on her father's first meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe shortly after the election. At the same time, officials with her clothing company were working on a licensing agreement with Sanei International. The largest shareholder of Sanei's parent company is the Development Bank of Japan, which is wholly owned by the Japanese government headed by Abe.

Another source of potential corruption that could set off a constitutional crisis is in Argentina. That country's president, Mauricio Macri, has known Trump for decades because he is the son of one of the president-elect's former business associates. (Macri, who is a conservative, supported Hillary Clinton in the U.S. election because he didn't like Trump's anti-immigration stance.) For years, Trump has been trying to get an office project going in Buenos Aires but has not been able to gain all the necessary government permits. Instead, his Argentinian partners financed a Trump building in Uruguay.

Trump and Macri spoke by telephone on November 14, just after the U.S. election. Days later, Jorge Lanata, one of Argentina's most respected journalists, reported on the television program *Periodismo para Todos* ("Journalism for All") that Trump asked Macri during the call to deal with the permitting problems that were holding up the Buenos Aires project. Officials for Trump and Macri both denied Trump said it; Reuters subsequently reported that Ivanka Trump was on that call, even though she has no official or proposed government role.



EXTRADITION BLUES: The Obama administration refused to send Gülen to Turkey without some proof that he was behind the recent coup attempt there, but the Turks think they can get a better deal from Trump.

Just three days after the phone call, a major Argentinian newspaper, *La Nación*, reported that after years of delay, the project in Buenos Aires was ready to go. Trump's partners with YY Development Group announced that all but a few administrative problems had been cleared and that they expected to break ground in July. If Argentinian officials issued any permits for this project after the U.S. election—or do so at any time in the next four years—Trump could once again be in violation of the Emoluments Clause. That the funding for the project ultimately came from the Argentinian businessmen (Trump's partners) would not change the fact that the government was responsible for raining down riches on the Trump family.

Given the extraordinary power Donald Trump now wields, it's obvious that foreign governments and corporations can easily curry favor, bribe or even blackmail him, which is why the Founding Fathers so feared outside influences on the Executive Branch. Once he's president, Trump does not need to ask for cash to be delivered to his pockets or to those of his children to cross the line into illicit activities—and possibly

impeachable offenses. Macri of Argentina cannot know if his country will be punished by the Trump White House if the remaining permits for that Buenos Aires project are denied. Abe of Japan does not know if a government holdup of Ivanka Trump's deal with Sanei International will lead her impulsive father to call for an American military withdrawal from his country. Erdogan of Turkey has told associates he believes he must keep pressure on Trump's business partner there to essentially blackmail the president into extraditing a political enemy. Duterte of the Philippines believes he has received approval from the president-elect to, at best, abide by or, at worst, continue to authorize the frenzied slaughter of drug users and dealers, and knows he can harm the Trump family if the president ever angers him.

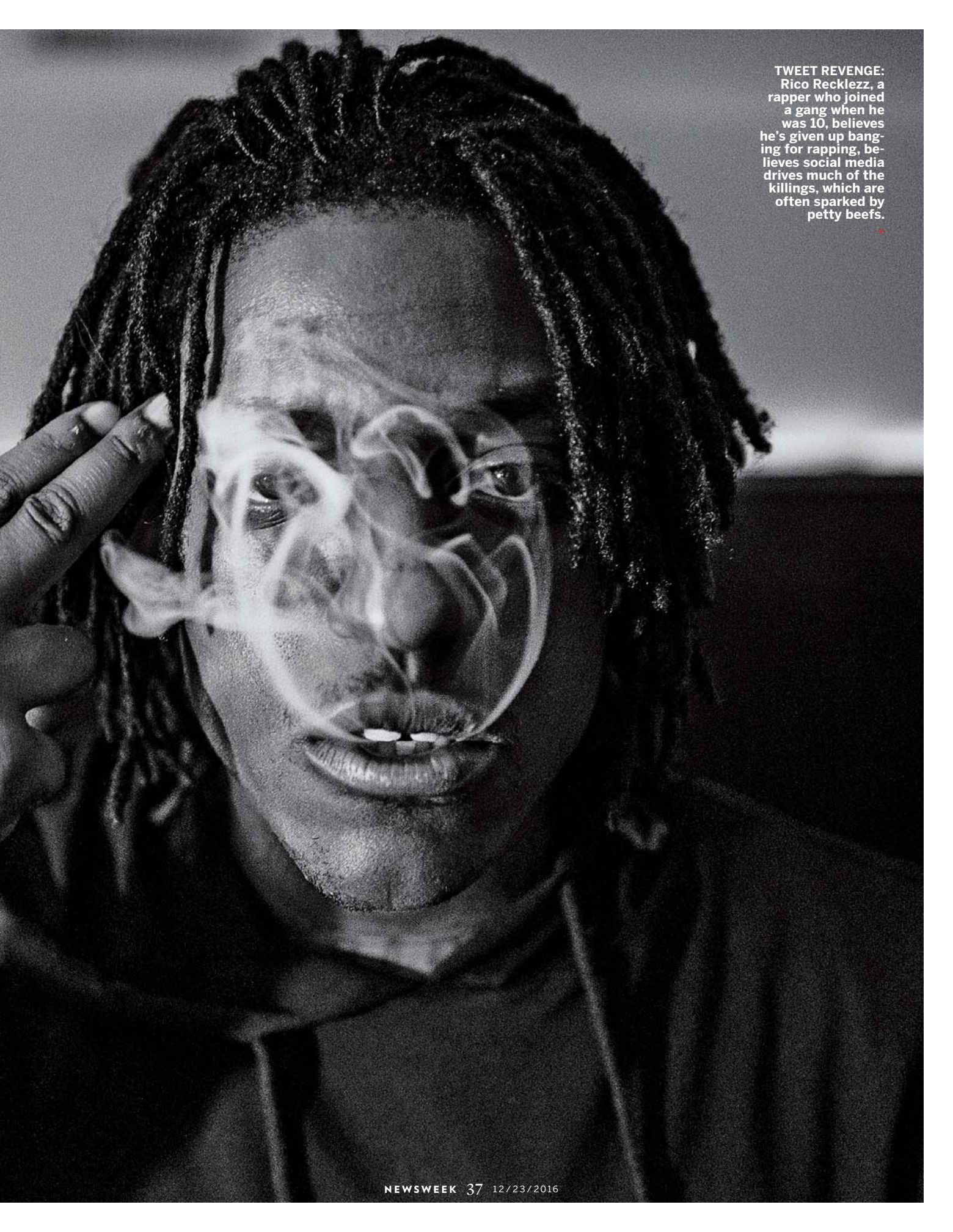
America is on the precipice of an unprecedented threat, as allies and enemies alike calculate whether they are dealing with a president they can please merely by enriching his children. President-elect Trump has a monumental choice before him: He can, as he promised during the campaign, protect the sanctity of the presidency—which he can do only by selling his company. Or he can remain corrupted by the conflicts between his country's future and his family's fortunes. **N**

MURDER IN THE WIND

GANG-RELATED VIOLENCE HAS PLAGUED CHICAGO SINCE THE 1960S, BUT 2016 HAS BEEN THE BLOODIEST YEAR IN ALMOST TWO DECADES

By JOSH SAUL
Photographs by JON LOWENSTEIN





TWEET REVENGE: Rico Recklezz, a rapper who joined a gang when he was 10, believes he's given up banging for rapping, believes social media drives much of the killings, which are often sparked by petty beefs.

ON A FRIDAY AFTERNOON IN MAY, JAMES, A SOFT-SPOKEN 19-YEAR-OLD, HAD FINISHED HIS SHIFT MAKING SANDWICHES AT JIMMY JOHN'S AND WAS WALKING IN CHICAGO'S BRONZEVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD WHEN HE HEARD FOUR OR FIVE LOUD GUNSHOTS RING OUT. "I LOOKED," JAMES SAYS, "AND I SEE MY ASS BLEED."



He sprinted down State Street as one bullet pierced his arm and another flew past him and hit a woman walking out of a Starbucks with her afternoon coffee. Yvonne Nelson was pronounced dead at a hospital 40 minutes later. "She was a working-hard lady, a city worker," says James who asked me not to use his last name because he fears more attacks. "She lost her life for nothing." Nelson died in a nice neighborhood, a block from Chicago Police Department (CPD) headquarters, where the police had just announced the arrest of almost 100 gang members.

About a week after the shooting, James learned on Instagram that his would-be assassin was a 15-year-old affiliated with a gang called Murder Town. James was targeted because he used to run with a small crew associated with the Gangster Disciples, the city's largest gang. "I did stuff in my past. I ain't no perfect child," he says. "He ain't know me. Somebody sent him

off. A little kid trying to earn some stripes."

Nelson was the 238th homicide in Chicago this year. In early March, experts worried the total number of homicides could reach 600 in 2016, a startling increase over any year in the past decade. But the pace of the killings accelerated, and by the end of November, the city had more than 700 murders for the first time since 1998; that's more murders than in New York City and Los Angeles combined. (Smaller cities like New Orleans and Detroit have higher per capita homicide rates.) The national murder rate, while historically low, is projected to increase by 13 percent this year—with almost half that increase attributable solely to Chicago, according to the Brennan Center.

Here, in the biggest city in the American heartland, teens murder each other over Twitter beefs, and grown men shoot children in the head—sometimes by accident and sometimes on purpose. The carnage has even earned the city a grim nickname:

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HOW MANY MORE? Protests over the shooting of black teen Laquan McDonald prompted Chicago's mayor to fire the chief of police last December, but there have been more controversial shootings since.



Chiraq. As Chicago-raised rapper Kanye West raps in his song “Murder to Excellence”: “I feel the pain in my city wherever I go/314 soldiers died in Iraq, 509 died in Chicago,” a reference to the death tolls of those places in 2008.

Roughly 90 percent of this violence, police say, flows from gangs. And the rivalry that police say led to Nelson’s death reflects the changing nature of criminal organizations in Chicago. Massive gangs like the Gangster Disciples and the Black Disciples used to operate with a corporate-like hierarchy and business planning, but aggressive federal prosecutions and the teardown of public housing splintered and scattered the gangs.

Chicago’s modern history of gang violence, especially on its West and South sides, goes back to the 1960s. (As bad as 2016 is, the total number of murders will still be well below the over 900 annual murders in the early 1990s.) But over the past year, two things have accelerated the attacks: Budget cuts reduced the number of anti-violence social workers who once cooled the simmering feuds, and a series of deadly police shootings and alleged misconduct by police have torpedoed the relationship between cops and residents.

Over the past 18 months, the drawdown of police and social workers has led to an explosion of violence not seen in almost 20 years—in August, 90 people were killed. It’s as if Chicago pulled its firefighters off a massive blaze and now residents are watching the flames engulf the entire city.

BEFORE THE WEST SIDE BURNED

ON A WARM NIGHT in September, Alonzo Lee was sitting outside his family’s South Chicago home with his 3-year-old son, Akil, waiting for Alonzo’s father, Benny. Benny is a college instructor and respected social worker who teaches classes on the gangs of Chicago, but as a young man he was a feared leader with the powerful Vice Lords gang. Akil yells, “Main man!” as he runs to greet his grandfather, who scoops up the barefoot boy into his arms and quietly replies, “Hey, little rascal.”

Benny, a serious, soft-spoken man, has a photo of the boy as the background on his phone. Alonzo says that when he was a child, Benny would tell him stories about gang life, and about how he and his childhood friends ended up in prison. But Alonzo still ended up joining No Limit, a renegade offshoot of the Black P Stones. Until November 2015, Alonzo says, he made \$3,500 a day selling marijuana. Last fall, police raided Benny’s house looking for Alonzo, who also got into a gunfight with a rival from a different set of his gang.

Alonzo says his father never glorified gang life and always tried to steer him away from it, but standing outside their home that night, Benny speaks warmly of his old life. “I had a lot of fun,” he says. “It was a lot of wrongdoing, but I had a lot of fun hustling back then.”

Benny was just entering his teens when his family moved into Austin in the mid-1960s, one of just three black families in an otherwise all-white West Side neighborhood. “We had to band together to fight whites just to walk through the neighborhood,” he says. “Just to get to the nearest swimming pool.” That small crew of boys was his first step toward the gang life.

Large swaths of the West Side burned during the riots in 1968 that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Whites fled neighborhoods in South and West Chicago, and as Austin became majority-black, large criminal organizations absorbed the small crews there. The Vice Lords, a sprawling West Side gang, took in Benny’s crew when he was 14. He and his clique carried guns for protection against other gangs and ran small-time hustles, like robbing neighborhood shops and jumping onto moving trucks to steal radios and televisions. But he wasn’t on the streets for long. A race riot at his high school got him sent to “juvie” at age 15, and for the next 15 years, he split his time between the streets, where he was briefly the top leader of the Insane

Grown men shoot children in the head—sometimes by accident and sometimes on purpose.

Vice Lords, controlling about 2,000 gang members, and behind bars. He quit the Vice Lords for good when he left prison at 29—“I told the ruling body that I was backing away,” he says—and later began a career in anti-violence social work that gave him an ongoing view into gang culture.

Benny says that into the 1990s, when the gangs of Chicago had clear lines of authority, most of the violence involved turf squabbles and disputes over drug deals. If a gang member wanted to shoot a rival, he went to a leader for permission or risked punishment for attracting police attention that would endanger profit margins. And gang members honored a strict code against shooting children and bystanders. “When you had the gangs controlling the trafficking, the shootings were ordered,” Benny says. “It was business.”

Two events splintered Chicago’s large, organized gangs into the smaller crews that now shoot

up the streets. In the mid-’90s, federal prosecutions targeted and imprisoned gang leaders. At roughly the same time, the city’s troubled public housing was taken over by the federal government, which began plans to tear down the high-rises that had become a national symbol of urban blight. Over the next 15 years, the city demolished notoriously dangerous towers like Cabrini-Green because of decrepit conditions and soaring crime. The unintended consequence: The gangs that had been largely contained in those buildings were now scattered like demon seeds in the wind.

In the early 2000s, about two decades after Benny left the Vice Lords, Alonzo began banging with the Bar None gang, a set affiliated with the Gangster Disciples. He joined for much the same reason his father did: to prevent getting jumped in his neighborhood. “You kind of get that fear as a shortie that I can’t be that guy who gets beat up. I can’t be that guy who gets chased home,” Alonzo says. “If you don’t fight, you’ll be running your whole damn life.”

Back then, gang leaders—“big homies”—would intervene when young gang members beat up a rival. “You’d get the older guys saying, ‘We don’t want this to be no war,’” Alonzo recalls. He adds that leaders would organize a fistfight between the victim and one of the attackers to forestall gunplay that would bring police attention.

But the old order was crumbling. Alonzo recounts what it was like when gang members from a demolished project moved into a neighborhood of single-family homes. “Nigga, I’m from the building,” a transplant would say, asserting his right to sell drugs near his new home.

“Well, I’m from these blocks,” the longtime neighborhood resident would respond. “You can’t sell cocaine on this block.”

“Well shit, nigga, I’m over here now,” the transplant would spit back. Alonzo growls like a rapper as he describes the landscape of project gang members spread across the city and the uncountable territorial skirmishes and shootings that followed as a result. “You either gonna kill me or what, I’m gonna keep getting money.”

‘HE TERRORIZED PEOPLE’

IN A DARK, smoky South Loop studio, Rico Recklezz, a popular local rapper with dreadlocks and a tattoo of a machine gun on his stomach, leans into the microphone and growls out a verse. “Nowadays little niggas like to talk tough on YouTube and Twitter,” he spits. “Make me slide on you, hop out, walk up on your dumb ass and kill you.”





LONG-ARM'S LENGTH: Protests and lawsuits related to police shootings have prompted Chicago cops to pull way back, to make many fewer stops, which has contributed to a spike in violent crime in some neighborhoods.



Recklezz—whose real name is Ronnie Ramsey—had family in the Black P Stone gang when he was young. At 10, he joined too, and by 14 he was carrying a gun. “He was a beast,” says Tray, a gang member in Englewood, a rough South Side neighborhood. “He terrorized people.”

Recklezz, now 25, was a teenager when Chicago tore down its projects. Sitting on a recording studio couch while working on a blunt the size of my ring finger, he explains how most gang members no longer have a leader issuing or enforcing rules. They operate in small crews of as few as a dozen members and open fire with no concern for who might catch a stray bullet.

In 2011, some bangers with a beef against Recklezz shot up his home and hit his mother and older sister. (Both survived.) “Hypothetically speaking, if I was a gang member and I was into it with somebody that did something to me, why would I care if there’s an old man outside?” Recklezz says. “That old man better duck.”

He says young men shoot each other over seemingly insignificant insults and conflicts. Violence that might seem gang-related is often “just” personal. A 15-year-old Gangster Disciple named Speedy says that what sparks the most violence between gangs is “hoes.” Speaking over the phone in September, he scoffs at the idea of asking a higher-up for permission before attacking a rival and says there’s no real leader of his small GD crew, echoing what I heard from other young gang members. “Everybody’s on the same level,” says Speedy, who claims he’s been shot in the stomach and back. “If we want to shoot someone, we just pull up on them and start shooting.”

The insults that spark those shootings are often delivered on social media. Young men call out one another in long-winded threats in comment sections, and when they finally meet up face to face, there’s often nothing left to say; sometimes they start shooting immediately. “If they cut off all the social media sites, I ain’t gonna lie, it’ll stop some killing,” Recklezz says.

Just as young white professionals post photos of themselves in Aspen or the Hamptons to show how fun and glamorous they are, poor Chicago teens post photos of themselves with guns and cash to show how hard they are. “Everyone



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“We had to band together to fight whites just to walk through the neighborhood.”
—

playing so tough because of the internet,” Recklezz says. “That’s why they getting killed.”

Part of the reason young men are “playing so tough” is because, in very rare cases, the online posturing—combined with a real street reputation—can translate into millions. A handful of Chicago rappers, like Chief Keef, a Black Disciple from Englewood, have become “drill music” stars, signed record deals and made enough money to start collecting art.

Recklezz is hoping to do the same. Back in the

studio, he takes a call from a rapper who wants his help with a track. Recklezz tells him the price is \$500 for a verse or \$1,000 to appear in a video. “You can do Western Union or MoneyGram, whatever,” he tells the caller and hangs up.

He then turns to me and says, “I’m finna put my kids in a crib off this rap shit.”

WHEN THE DRUG HOUSE GOES DARK

TRAY IS STANDING on the street outside a drug house in Englewood. It operates with the permission of the local Gangster Disciple “big homie,” and the GDs here call their territory “No Love City,” which is tagged in the stairwell of the Airbnb across the street. A steady stream of customers



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TRYING TO HOLD ON: Community organizer Ameena Matthews comforts a protestor during a rally against police brutality in Chicago; Rev. Jesse Jackson, right, has led similar protests.

park their cars on the corner and walk up to the raised porch to hand money up to a slow-moving fat man. The fat man hands the money through a slitted window, receives contraband in return, then ambles back to lean over the porch railing and pass the drugs down to buyers in the alley.

"I'm doing work. Trying to see what these police up to," says Tray, 19, peering down the block at a parked CPD SUV, the hood of his blue Yale sweatshirt pulled up over his dreadlocks.

Whenever Tray meets someone from outside his bleak neighborhood, he asks them for a job. He became a Gangster Disciple in seventh grade because there wasn't much food at home. He carried a gun for protection and earned money selling weed and Xanax, he says. As we talk, he's sitting down the street from the drug house, on the stoop of the dilapidated house where he lives, where Cheetos bags and blunt wrappers litter the small yard and empty lots across the street mark where abandoned homes were torn down by the city. Many Chicago children and young teens join gangs for the same reason, he says: poverty.

It's impossible to separate Chicago's murder rate from its destitution, and its ugly legacy as one of the nation's most segregated cities. The 16-block census tract where I stayed while reporting this story is 96 percent black and has a poverty rate of 46 percent, figures that are roughly the same in most of the Chicago neighborhoods with high murder rates. There are few banks or grocery stores on these blocks, but many liquor stores and off-brand cellphone shops.

"It's hard to find and get a job," says Dontell "DJ" Annan, another Gangster Disciple. "That's what leads to the gangs and people hanging on the street and people holding guns." He's wearing dirty Crocs and a black tank top as we sit on a stoop across the street from the drug house Tray watches over. A silver hatchback speeds by the drug house, and DJ says driving fast is a good way to get your car shot up by wary gang members. "Now if we had some jobs, I don't think none of this would be happening," he adds.

A few days after Tray spotted the police SUV, I return to the drug house, but there's no fat man on the porch and no customers parked on the corner. Tray, on the street again, says the drug house was selling to too many customers, so the big homie ordered it temporarily shut down. "Their door was going to get kicked in," he explains.

He asks me to check him out online, where he has posted slickly produced music videos of him rapping in expensive clothes in videos with titles like "Shooters Everywhere." I can also see that he has an impressive number of Twitter followers, but with the drug house shuttered, Tray has

little to do today. Or tomorrow. "This is where I'm from," he says, "so this is what I am."

'WE'RE ALWAYS WRONG'

POLICE SUVs rolled by that Englewood drug house regularly, at least once an hour, when I visited it over five days in late September, and they are a common sight in other violent Chicago neighborhoods. But I never saw the police stop a car or speak with anyone on the street. A veteran Chicago PD detective—who asked that his name not be used because he's not allowed to speak with reporters—says that's a shift from the more proactive policing the department once practiced.

Over an antipasti salad in Little Italy (he's trying to eat better), the detective says the current focus on police misconduct has kept cops in their cars. He even advises officers under his command to make fewer stops to avoid encounters



that could result in complaints or lawsuits. The feeling among Chicago cops is that when a suspect resists arrest or pulls out a weapon and they respond with force, they fear they'll end up on the news or the target of lawsuits that will upend their lives and derail their careers.

Statistics back up his claim. The number of stops between January and late November dropped from about 560,000 in 2015 to 100,000 this year, a result of chastened cops as well as a new agreement between the city and the American Civil Liberties Union that changed the rules for stops. Gun seizures are up 20 percent over the same period, to over 8,000 this year, though that figure includes firearms handed in at gun buybacks - a program the CPD stepped up in 2016. Chicago once had strict gun laws, but over the past six years, federal courts have struck down its handgun ban, ended Illinois's concealed carry ban and forced the city

to allow gun stores to open. Plus, smugglers bring in firearms from neighboring states.

Whatever your feelings about cops, the withdrawal of a city's police force can hurt the fight against violent crime, according to Zachary Fardon, the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. The current violence spike in Chicago followed four events late last year that kneecapped residents' confidence in police and officer morale, he said in a speech in late September.

First, in November, the city released graphic dashcam video of a white officer fatally shooting Laquan McDonald, a black 17-year-old who was walking away from police. After protesters and the City Council's Black Caucus demanded the ouster of Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy, Mayor Rahm Emanuel fired him on December 1. Less than a week later, the U.S. Department of Justice announced it would investigate the department, focusing on its use of force and whether any racial groups bore the brunt of it. Finally, the agreement that went into effect January 1 between the city and the ACLU also requires police to fill out lengthy contact cards every time they stop someone.

"I also think that the fallout in public confidence—the apparent embattlement of police on all fronts—created a sense of emboldened aggressiveness among gang members, especially in Chicago's most violence-afflicted neighborhoods," Fardon says. "Some gang members apparently felt they could get away with more, and so more bullets start[ed] flying."

A news report that leaders from three West Side gangs had gathered to plot attacks on cops was "complete bullshit," the detective tells me as we eat our salads—there are no more "big bosses" that would hold such meetings. Still, the department did warn officers that gang members planned to target them, and officers reportedly responded by keeping a lower profile and stopping fewer people.

Recent research reveals another drawback to high-profile police misconduct. One study shows that after news reports about police assaults or shootings of innocent black men, calls to 911 and other crime reporting drop significantly, especially in black neighborhoods.

While I was in Chicago, Emanuel announced the hiring of 970 officers, detectives and supervisors in a bid to lower the murder rate. When I asked the detective whether he thought the new cops would help, he blew air through his lips to make a farting noise and gave a thumbs-down with his non-fork hand. "It would help if they got rid of this crap of 'We're always wrong,'" he says.

"They hop out on you less," Tray says of the police bowing out of aggressive stops. The police still drive by and see young men selling drugs, but





+ CURE VIOLENCE? Social workers known as violence interrupters try to get in the middle of beefs on the streets before they are resolved with guns, but funding for such programs has been slashed.

they don't stop. They used to get out of their car the first time they passed by, Tray says. But now they'll drive by twice without stopping, and only if the young men are still there on the third pass will they get out of their patrol cars.

"I tell them, 'Be careful. Don't be so aggressive out there. Think of your family before you go out there and do something,'" the detective says as he finishes his salad, laying out the advice he gives officers under his command. "Policing has changed. If you don't change with it, you're going to lose your job."

THE MEN WHO INTERRUPT BULLETS

IT'S DUSK, and the liquor store parking lot on the corner of East 79th Street and East End Avenue is crowded. Up to a dozen men, most in their late teens and early 20s, stand around talking and laughing and shadowboxing, smoking cigarettes as young women stop by to flirt and smoke. The parking lot serves as an informal social club for people in the South Shore neighborhood.

A small team of social workers—they call themselves violence interrupters—stand on the corner of the parking lot and eye the young men. "We had a homicide over there where those kids are playing," says Ulysses Floyd, an ex-gang leader who now works as an interrupter for CeaseFire, the Illinois branch of the international program Cure Violence. "This is what we call a hot spot." That's why Floyd and a handful of other interrupters are standing on this corner in a Gangster Disciples neighborhood at 7 p.m. on a Thursday evening—to cool the boiling tempers that erupt into gunfire and bodies on the sidewalk outlined in chalk. In the two hours I'm there, no police drive by.

The interrupters are here to form relationships with the men in the parking lot so that when conflict inevitably flares, they can step in and steer the young men toward solutions that don't involve an ambulance. "Say some guys shoot over here right now. All the guys in the neighborhood are going to go get guns," says Chico Tillmon, a CeaseFire project manager whose gang past gives him credibility when he mediates conflicts.

"I would come to speak to that group unarmed, knowing they have guns, knowing they are upset and knowing they are shooters."

A Northwestern University study in 2009 found that CeaseFire decreased both overall shootings and retaliation killings among gang members. In 2014, a University of Illinois at Chicago study found that the program cut murders by 30 percent in the two police districts where the city funded its work. But in March 2015, a budget fight resulted in a freeze on state spending and a cut to social service programs, including CeaseFire, which

"If you don't fight, you'll be running your whole damn life."

had been operating in about 16 neighborhoods. The organization was able to keep its South Shore location open, however, and the interrupters from that office are here on East 79th Street this night.

There are few hopeful signs. Outside the liquor store, drunks beg for change, and inside mothers use food stamps to buy chips and juice for the toddlers trailing behind them. There is a memorial card for Jamel Rollins beside the cash register. He was a 17-year-old from northwest Chicago who was shot and killed by two men in the empty lot that adjoins the store. The card unfolds to the size of a full piece of paper and is expensively printed with notes from his mom and siblings and praise for his sense of humor, his passion for rapping and video games and his love of dogs.

The photographs of Rollins show him throwing up gang signs. He holds up a sign insulting the Black Disciples in one photo, disses the Latin Dragons in another and calls out the Vice Lords in a third. When anyone who wants to remember Rollins pulls out that card, they'll see the young man they loved celebrating the gang life that put him in the ground.

Back in the shadows on the darkened lawn in front of his family's home, Alonzo scans the street for signs of danger—just like Tray in front of the drug house and just like James when he leaves Jimmy John's. Next to him, Benny does the same as he cradles Akil in his arms, protective of the little boy who will soon grow up and have to make his own way through the streets of Chicago.

Benny and Alonzo pay special attention to any cars on their street cruising slowly, or any ones they don't recognize. "When I get out my car, I look in my rearview mirror to make sure nobody coming up behind me," Benny says. "Just 'cause I changed don't mean the world's changed." **N**

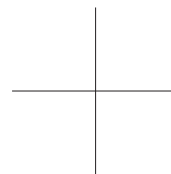




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MASTER MIMICRY: The leaf spider resembles fresh greenery on top, while its bottom is brown and speckled and looks like a wilted leaf.



NEW WORLD



INTERNET

SPIDERS

INNOVATION

SCIENCE

TECHNOLOGY

PLAGUE

GOOD SCIENCE

LEAF ME ALONE

Researchers find the first spider that camouflages itself as foliage

ON AN EVENING trek through the tropical forests of southern China, researcher Matjaz Kuntner and colleagues spied a strand of spider silk from which a row of leaves oddly dangled. They inspected, shining their flashlights on the curious sight. Then one of the leaves moved.

“Looking closer, we realized that one of them was not a leaf, it was a spider,” says Kuntner, an arachnologist at the Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts. “I was shocked.” Many species of insects resemble leaves, but this is the first arachnid known to look like foliage. This form of mimicry, in which animals camouflage themselves as uninteresting and inedible objects to evade predators, is known as masquerade.

The spider, which Kuntner and colleagues describe in a study published last month in the *Journal of Arachnology*, has a remarkable shape and color pattern. On top it resembles fresh greenery, while its bottom is brown and speckled and looks like a wilted leaf.

The researchers subsequently searched the

area for more specimens but found only a single juvenile. The creature is in the genus *Poltys*, a group of orb-weaving spiders that live in China and produce distinctive circular webs. The scientists haven’t yet given it a species designation.

The spider is nocturnal and spends its days doing its best leaf impression. It may be able to select leaves with hues similar to its own body, allowing it to camouflage itself more effectively, Kuntner says. The tactic likely helps it avoid becoming dinner for animals that eat spiders, such as wasps and birds. At night, however, it weaves an orb-shaped web to catch prey.

“This study provides a great example of the boundless opportunities for scientific discovery available to those observant individuals [who] embrace and explore the natural world around them,” says Eileen Hebets, who studies spiders at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln but wasn’t involved in the paper. “There is still a lot about our natural world that remains unknown to us, and slowing down and simply taking the time to observe can lead to significant discoveries.” **N**

MATJAZ KUNTNER

BY
DOUGLAS MAIN
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DISRUPTIVE

FIRST, WE KILL ALL THE EXPERTS

The internet has made us despise professionals, from plumbers to presidents

FOR 240 YEARS, Americans have believed anybody could be president. This November, the internet finally made that happen.

People voted for Donald Trump for many different reasons, but they had to believe, on some level, that a man willfully ignorant of the president's job—and who pitched his ignorance as a feature, not a bug—can work the levers of the Oval Office just fine. For the first time, voters in the U.S. said professional experience is not necessary for perhaps the most complex job in the world.

Trump, in turn, tapped Dr. Ben Carson to do a Cabinet job for which he has no qualifications. Carson got this far in the Republican Party by portraying himself as a clueless politician instead of an Ivy League-educated neurosurgeon. He once tweeted, “It is important to remember that amateurs built the Ark and it was the professionals that built the *Titanic*.” If this anti-professionalism works in reverse, politicians can watch a few YouTube videos and pull off brain surgery.

We're witnessing “the ascendancy of the notion that the people whom we should trust the least are the people who best know what they are talking about,” writes Charles Pierce in his book, *Idiot America*. Anti-professionalism is not new, of course. In the early 1960s, historian Richard Hofstadter felt driven to write *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, which won the Pulitzer Prize. But

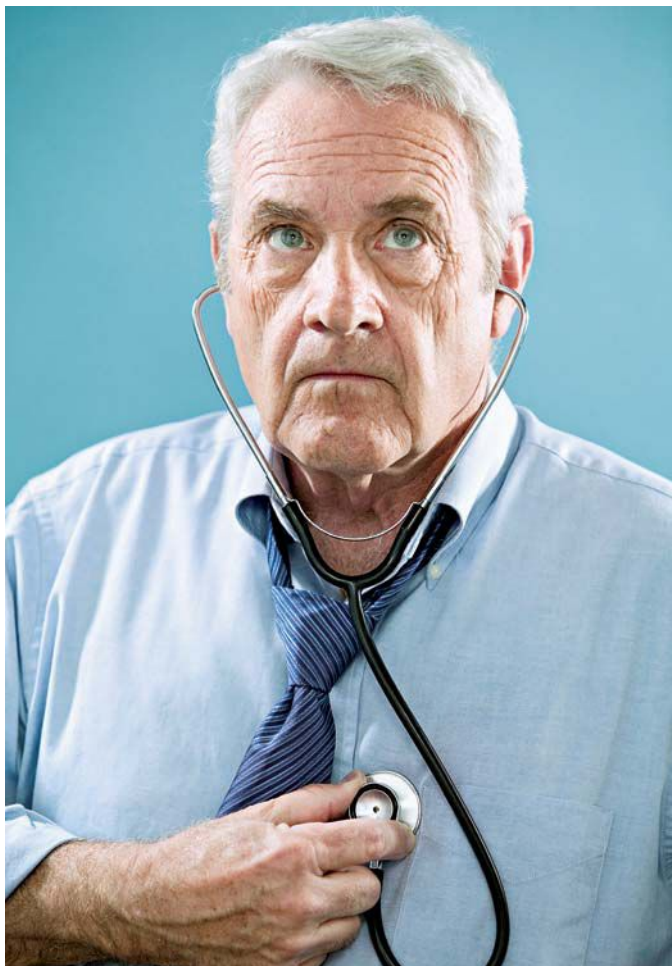
Hofstadter's observations were like feeling a few drops of rain at the front end of a hurricane and wondering if you need an umbrella. He had no idea how bad it was going to get.

Why this war on pros? A lot of the blame falls on the internet. Look how the net has affected medicine. As the techies would say, the internet democratizes information: It sets free info that companies, governments and professionals used to horde and wield for power. So in many ways, democratizing information is good. It means a car salesman can't swindle us because now we have access to car-pricing data. And it helps us be better informed about our health and medical care.

Yet there are unintended consequences to setting information free. We used to revere doctors and, for better and sometimes worse, implicitly trusted their judgment. Now we show up at our doctor's office after pre-diagnosing ourselves on the web. Doctors have a term for people who come in after Googling themselves sick: cybercondriacs. The result is an erosion of esteem for doctors. Now that we can easily know more about medicine, we're less impressed by what they know.

In my profession, the internet brought blogs and podcasts and other low-barrier ways to reach the public. Anybody could set herself up as a journalist, and just about anybody did. Over time, the internet helped devalue the journalism profession

BY
KEVIN MANEY
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**PATIENT, HEAL
THYSELF:** Self-
diagnosis for
medical conditions
is a huge part of
Google traffic.

to the point where today Gallup reports that public confidence in mass media “has dropped to its lowest level in Gallup polling history.”

The same dynamic has pummeled all sorts of professions. If you can find out anything about travel on Expedia or TripAdvisor, why believe a travel agent knows anything of value? If something is wrong with your bathroom pipes, you can find an online video showing how to fix it. So what’s the value of a plumber?

This is only going to get more prevalent. Artificial intelligence is making web-based tools smarter, which means we’ll soon get not just information but expertise built into free or cheap online services. Some startup is going to offer an AI lawyer to work through our divorce agreement so we don’t have to pay a human \$300 an hour. The Maker movement—do-it-yourself engineering—is all about democratizing invention and production. If Noah were around today, he’d come home from a Maker Faire, buy a 3-D printer, download free open-source boat-building hacks and then bark at nautical engineers to get out of his face.

Even the way we work is devaluing profession-

alism. We’re supposedly entering the net-driven gig economy, defined by doing lots of different kinds of jobs in small batches. You might do freelance coding a few hours a day, rent out your room on Airbnb and sell hand-thrown neti pots on Etsy to somehow claw out a living. If that’s the path to success tomorrow, it means the value is in knowing a little about a lot of things. Companies these days love Agile development, which throws people together in teams that do incremental work at a fast pace. In such an environment, deep knowledge can make you seem like a dinosaur. Fast knowledge—basically, fast-food professionalism—gets you a raise.

Granted, popular culture has never cried too hard over the comeuppance of the professional class. The 1939 movie *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* was all about a rube who gets appointed to the Senate and shows up the veterans. (Sequel, anyone?) Today, when we hear about the possibility of AI-guided self-driving trucks ransacking truck driver jobs, the drivers get sympathy, as they should. Talk about AI knocking off lawyers, though, and most folks will break into a jig.

How will all this play out? I’ve heard some technologists say we’re ultimately going back to a self-sufficient way of life that echoes the pre-industrial age. In those days, people did everything at home because they had to—the nearest professional might have been a two-day horse ride away. So you made your own clothes, built your own furniture, analyzed your own finances, amputated your own gangrenous toe.

In the future version of that, you’ll do everything at home not because you have to but because you can, and because you think professionals suck. You’ll fire up a cloud-based service to scan your body and help you design your own clothes to perfectly fit you. You’ll 3-D-print furniture parts and

**IN THE FUTURE, YOU’LL
DO EVERYTHING AT HOME
BECAUSE YOU THINK
PROFESSIONALS SUCK.**

bolt them together, Ikea-style. Some AI Schwab account will manage your money. And your R2-D2 robot armed with a laser will tap into Mayo Clinic software and deal with that ugly toe for you.

Maybe that will turn out to be a better way of life, but consider this: Kanye will be president. ■



ZIKA, EINSTEIN AND WEED BACKERS...

The hot science stories you might've overlooked during this wild year

IN A YEAR when the U.S. presidential campaign dominated the headlines (who won?), you might have missed some of the most interesting and important science and health stories. Here are a few of *Newsweek's* favorites.

WEED BACKERS

On November 8, voters in four states chose to legalize recreational marijuana, bringing the number of states with such laws to eight (plus Washington, D.C.). Another 20 states allow medical use of marijuana. Activists were ecstatic that California approved recreational use—with its huge economy, the legal cannabis market is projected to grow to \$22 billion by 2020. Pot's growing acceptance will make it easier to study conditions for which it could be helpful, such as epilepsy, glaucoma and cancer. —Sandy Ong

BLOW YOUR MIND, PLEASE

There is an alarming dearth of new psychiatric treatments, and truly novel pharmaceuticals haven't been developed in a generation. However, research on psychedelics, such as psilocybin, the active ingredient in psychoactive or "magic" mushrooms, has the potential to change that. Two studies published December 1 in the *Journal of Psychopharmacology* show that 80 percent of cancer patients facing extreme distress were significantly less depressed and anxious six months after a single session in which they ingested the medication. Another 2016 study suggests psilocybin could ease treatment-resistant depression.

These results haven't been demonstrated with any other class of drugs. —Douglas Main

PLANET NINE, PLANET NINE....

In January, two astronomers reported new evidence of a massive, shadowy Planet Nine tracing the outer limits of the solar system. It has a mass 10 times that of the Earth, and its orbit takes it 20 times farther from the sun, on average, than Neptune. The catch? Konstantin Batygin and Mike Brown of Caltech haven't seen it—they inferred its existence from the behavior of smaller objects nearby that appear to be subject to its gravitational pull. Now the search is on. Brown predicts astronomers will find it by 2018. —Paul Raeburn

ALBERT'S BLACK HOLES

In February, physicists confirmed they had detected gravitational waves—100 years after Albert Einstein first predicted their existence. The source? Two massive black holes crashing together 1.3 billion years ago in a collision so strong it sent ripples through the space-time fabric—perturbations also known as gravitational waves. After the Big Bang, it's the most powerful explosion ever detected. The waves were picked up by a pair of instruments at the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory, in Washington state and in Louisiana. —S.O.

EMBRACE THE FAT!

In early 2016, two federal health agencies released Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-

BY
NEWSWEEK STAFF



**WEED
BACKERS**



**BLOW YOUR
MIND, PLEASE**



**PLANET NINE,
PLANET NINE...**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: NANCY WEICHEC/REUTERS; R. HURT/CALTECH; GETTY



ZIKA GOES
GLOBAL

2020, Eighth Edition. It turned out to be unpopular with red-meat-loving lawmakers, who claimed its endorsement of vegetables was not based on current science. The sugar lobby complained the advice sullies its image by recommending that Americans limit sugar intake to just 10 percent of daily calorie intake. But there was one pleasant surprise: The panel of experts concluded that not all fat is bad. —Jessica Firger

ZIKA GOES GLOBAL

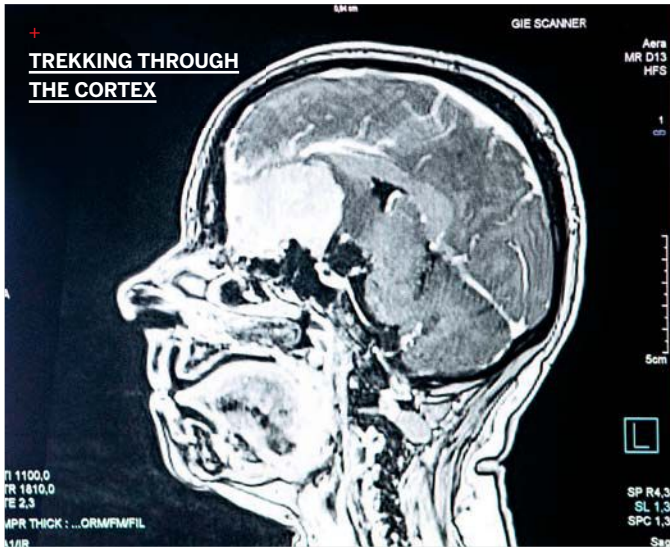
In a little over a year, the Zika virus spread to more than 50 countries and territories in Latin America, the Pacific and the Caribbean—and Florida. In July, for the first time, officials identified several cases of the virus in Miami-Dade County. Scientists have confirmed the mosquito-borne illness can cause the brain malformation microcephaly

AFTER THE BIG BANG, IT'S THE BIGGEST EXPLOSION EVER SEEN.

in infants born to mothers infected during pregnancy. Brazil reported at least 4,000 such cases. In the U.S., delayed funding slowed efforts to develop vaccines and drugs. —J.F.

TREKKING THROUGH THE CORTEX

Researchers have unveiled the most detailed map yet of the cerebral cortex, the outermost layer of the brain, responsible for language, tool use and abstract thinking. The map confirmed the



TREKKING THROUGH THE CORTEX

RUNNING OUT OF THE WILD

boundaries of 180 regions in the brain, 97 of them new to science. The map should enable neuroscientists to better understand how creativity and intelligence are reflected in the folds of the cortex. One intriguing discovery: The size of these regions varies from one individual to another, perhaps providing insight into our individual intellects and mental health. —P.R.

RUNNING OUT OF THE WILD

In the past two decades, humans have destroyed 10 percent of the world's wilderness, an area more than twice the size of Alaska. The Amazon Basin and central Africa have been particularly hard hit, with their wilderness areas declining

by 30 percent and 14 percent, respectively. Although the amount of protected land has doubled since the 1990s, much more needs to be done to offset the destruction. Wilderness is vital for preserving biodiversity and limiting climate change, and it's home to many indigenous peoples. —D.M.

CRISP GENE EDITS

In November, scientists in China reported the first use of an experimental—and controversial—gene-editing tool, known as CRISPR-Cas9, to treat lung cancer. The idea is to use a patient's modified white blood cells to attack the disease. CRISPR can also be used to correct misspellings in a genome to fix mutations or to insert new genes. Many fear that its arrival marks the beginning of the age of designer babies. —J.F.

PITY THE DROWNING RATS

The Bramble Cay melomys, a small Australian rodent, was declared extinct by researchers in June. The atoll where it lived is lower than 10 feet in elevation, and rising sea levels were blamed for destroying the melomys' habitat, making it the first mammalian casualty of climate change. Its numbers dwindled to 12 in 2004. Researchers from the University of Queensland had planned an emergency captive breeding program to increase their numbers but found upon returning in 2016 that none were left. —S.O.

CAT CLAWS BACK

For the first time in a century, the global population of tigers has increased. In 1900, there were approximately 100,000 tigers throughout Asia, a number that plummeted to 3,200 by 2010. Scientists now say the trend has changed. They estimate that the population has climbed to just under 3,900. The increases have been seen in India, Russia, Nepal and Bhutan. Countries with tigers set a goal of doubling tiger populations by 2022, and research suggests there is enough habitat left to accommodate this growth, if the animals are properly protected. The increase is due in part to improved protections against poaching in some areas, although that remains an ever-present threat. —D.M. **N**



+ BENDING HEARTS AND MINDS: Valentine boasts that she's "the only ex-Chinese new car sales tycoon in the U.K.," and her success stems from her acid-trippy website.



DOWNTIME

SHAKESPEARE

CARS

TRAVEL

RESTAURANTS

MUSIC

TELEVISION

BEAUTY IS ONLY SCREEN-DEEP

Meet Ling Valentine, the genius behind the world's ugliest (and most beautiful) website

ONE OF THE best websites ever made is for a small car-leasing company in England. Seriously, take a look: LingsCars.com. It breaks every conceivable rule for “good” web design and is borderline painful to look at. It’s a work of art.

Its aesthetic can best be described as late-'90s GeoCities page, designed by a disgraced clown after ingesting a pillowcase full of LSD. The layout is crowded and confusing. There are multiple fonts in bright colors, some of them flashing. GIFs of cats and dogs scurry across the page. A small video auto-plays, featuring random karaoke performances of Chinese pop songs by a few of Ling’s Cars’s 10 employees. There’s a video FAQ section, and one of the answers features a flight attendant swigging from a bottle of Jack Daniel’s as she assures you the site is not a scam.

It’s very much not a scam. Designed by Ling’s Cars owner Ling Valentine—obvious for anyone who spends more than a few seconds on the site, as her name and face are posted all over it—the

site mostly functions as a publicity stunt for her company. Valentine, who describes herself as the only “ex-Chinese female new car sales tycoon in the U.K.,” once appeared on an episode of the BBC’s *Dragon’s Den* (kind of like America’s *Shark Tank*) only to refuse their investment offer; she also purchased what she calls a “nuclear rocket truck”—a Chinese nuclear decontamination truck with a giant missile attached to the back—and parked it on the side of the highway, to the dismay of local government officials, who in a crackdown on roadside advertising ordered her to move it.

The publicity stunts work: Her site has gotten a lot of attention for its retro design, and she leased tons of cars (by her count \$106,192,200 worth of new cars in the U.K. in 2015).

Making one of the strangest websites was sort of accidental for Valentine. She grew up in China and left in 1997 to study wood chemistry at the Helsinki University of Technology. “I failed the MSC,” Valentine says, “on the basis that it was

BY
JOE VEIX
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DANIEL FERNANDEZ



bloody hard to learn Finnish.” It wasn’t a complete loss: She met her future husband, Jon, online and joined him in the U.K., where she completed a Master of Science in environmental management. After she graduated, “I looked around for a job, but saw my husband, Jon, selling cars, and thought, I can do better than him. So I did.”

When she started the site, it looked like any other early-2000s leasing site. “I had no web training apart from the crash course in Linux in Finland but managed to scrape a website together,” she says. “I started to do well leasing new cars, as this was the time of the first real growth in internet sales.” In 2001, with the help of students from Sunderland University, she built a functioning customer relationship management software called Lingo. Then, over the next few years, the site started expanding.

Valentine has been working on the site gradually over 15 years (according to the top of the page, it’s currently on version 238.20160215). Rather than occasionally redesigning the entire site, as most companies do every few years with their sites, she adds to it, layering new features upon old. Using the Wayback Machine, one can watch the site grow in complexity over time, like a neon fractal made of GIFs. Currently, the source code for the site is nearly 4,000 lines long. By comparison, the code for Apple.com is about 500 lines.

Its density is intentional, evidenced by the Website Advice section of her site, where the advice is more philosophical than practical. “Don’t let 1 day go by without changing or feeding or petting website, even tiny thing. If you don’t feed website it will die,” she writes. “Website is like an extension of you, person behind business. Are you alive? Then website should be alive.”

Although a few writers have proclaimed it the “ugliest” site on the internet—that seems severely misguided. The site imagines a utopian alternate history of the web, before corporate greed and bandwidth restraints turned it into a sanitized digital mall. LingsCars.com shows us a reality in which GeoCities wasn’t unceremoni-

ously shut down and deleted, leaving only a myth and a dark tomb in the form of a 1-terabyte torrent for only the brave to explore.

Instead, most companies use a boring Bootstrap template. Go to any startup’s homepage and you’ll see the same, easily parodied design. In addition to generating publicity for her business, Valentine’s site is partially a reaction to this. “The current w.w.web is STILL not very human-friendly. I usually get very angry with other web efforts as they are pretty poor in usability terms, and generally patronising and condescending,” she writes. “If there is any fun, it is boardroom-chic type ‘fun,’ which is nonoffensive and grating and has been through decision making process.”

But there’s no need to be pessimistic about the dull state of contemporary web design. Uninspired minimal design isn’t a mandatory require-

RAIDER OF THE LOST ART: Instead of periodically redesigning her site, Valentine just keeps adding to it, giving it more layers than an archaeological dig in Sumeria.

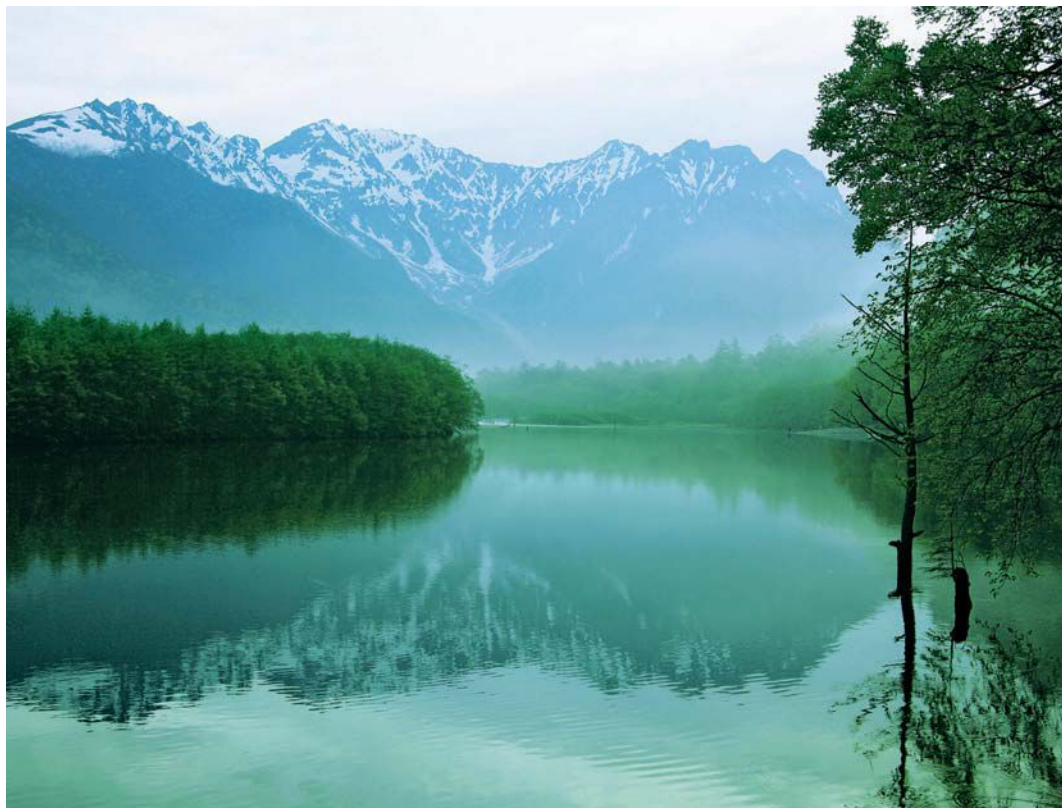


A FLIGHT ATTENDANT SWIGGING FROM A BOTTLE OF JACK DANIEL'S ASSURES YOU THE SITE IS NOT A SCAM.

ment, and as Valentine proves, a bizarre site doesn’t decrease sales. Perhaps that alternate history of the web is still attainable, if only people were willing to risk making something original (even if it is considered hideous by a large portion of the internet). This seems to be the operating logic that gave the early web its kitschy appeal.

Or as Valentine puts it: “People like ‘real,’ so I give them real.” **N**

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PATH OF LEAST
RESISTANCE: Kamikochi's carefully
groomed hiking
trails make it a
paved paradise.



Can't See the Forest for the Tourists

When Tokyoites want to escape, they go to Kamikochi. All of them, apparently

EVERY COUNTRY should have its Shangri-la; perhaps this is Japan's. Thrust upward by tectonic mischief, Kamikochi, in the center of Japan's main island, attracts millions every year. Cool, green larch woods flank the slight but lively Azusa River that plunges through an erratic necklace of precipitous granite known in Japanese as "the mountains of the standing ears of corn."

So pristine are Kamikochi's habitats, so dreamy its peaks, that access has to be limited by banning private cars. That doesn't stop thousands of visitors from arriving each day to tramp its narrow trails. The crowds are inevitable. Japan's 127 million are crammed largely into super-cities, and much of its hinterlands have been ruthlessly cemented, and laid to waste. What's left is a deeply mountainous backyard—80 percent of Japan is valleys and hills—often too steep to explore or filled with dam water.

Those in their 20s are keenest to move out of Tokyo, but relo-

cating near Kamikochi is a tough option, according to some who have made the move. It's hard to find somewhere to live, says Ken Yamaguchi, who owns a ski lodge south of Kamikochi. "Locals only really rent to those they know and trust," he says. It took him three years to find a home for his family after he decided to leave his job as a social worker in Tokyo.

His offspring may not thank him for bringing them to a wilderness filled with black bears: Frequent signs on the trails warn of their danger, and hikers are advised to wear bells, whose tinkling is supposed to scare bears off. But wildness, or at least the appearance of it, is the region's strength. There are few of the tawdry convenience stores that squat like succubi all over Japan, and less of the concrete "rurban" blight that characterizes much of rural Japan.

The scarcity of buildings has another effect. Accommodations in the valley are expensive, though around its rim are

plenty of hotels with spas that tap into the region's scalding volcanic waters. A few even have open-air baths hewn out of rock, surrounded by not much more than shrubs and sky. At others, such as Shirahone Onsen just to the south of Kamikochi, you're encouraged to drink the water.

Silky with sediment, it tastes primal: mud and earth, with more than a touch of the chemistry set.

After the soaking and sipping comes the hiking. And the crowds, tramping the paved paths that run along the pebbly Azusa, their bear bells tinkling. Japanese bush warblers call from their hiding places in the dwarf bamboo, the air is green and sweet, and you can begin to believe the local translation of Kamikochi as "where the gods descended."

If they did, they'd have to stay on the path. Wandering off-piste is not tolerated at Kamikochi. "This is perhaps how the Japanese have come to experience nature," says Shawn McGlynn, a rangy, friendly young biologist from Montana, whom I meet over breakfast at the Northstar. "But it feels weird walking on a paved road in a so-called wilderness." Without much access to the wild, the Japanese have come to prefer an ordered, safe version of it—sting removed, tidy, pleasant and unchallenging. **N**

BY
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SHAKESPEARE ON ICE

The Bard is teaching students and inmates in California about actions and their consequences

DAMEION BROWN is on one knee, head in hand, surrounded by middle-school Shakespeare students, all doing their best to stand completely still. The seventh- and eighth-graders are part of a dramaturgy and design class at Oakland's Edna Brewer School, and they are doing a theater exercise in which they freeze on the com-

mand of their teacher, Jana Maiuri, using only their bodies and faces to convey a host of emotions: jealousy, anger, remorse. There are plenty of those feelings to be found in school, it seems, just as there are in prison.

The 48-year-old Brown, who looks like an NFL linebacker in the midst of all these kids,

BY
SEAN ELDER
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**CRIME AND
NOURISHMENT:**
San Quentin
inmate Lemar
Harrison as Mark
Antony in a prison
production of
Shakespeare's
Julius Caesar.

was serving a life sentence in California prisons for severely abusing three of his young children when he discovered acting—or it discovered him. He got involved in a Shakespeare-in-prison program that changed the course of his life. He was released in August 2015, after serving almost 23 years; with no acting experience before being sent to prison, Brown landed the role of Othello in a Marin Shakespeare Company production. This was how these students knew him: they'd seen him on stage. He was not an ex-con who'd committed unthinkable crimes but the black general who murdered his white wife in a fit of jealousy, before taking his own life. To them, he is Othello.

Later, the class sits in a circle of desks and asks questions of the actor. Did he do anything to psych himself up before each performance? one student wonders.

"I would tell myself, 'I am not one of these people,'" says Brown, in his rich baritone. "I am from Morocco. I married well, and nobody likes me."

"Othello is the other in our midst," says Philippa Kelly, the resident dramaturg at the California Shakespeare Theater in nearby Orinda. Kelly was one of the co-founders of the pilot program, called Making Shakespeare Real and Relevant, that brought Brown to Maiuri's theater class. "The awful thing about Othello is that, in the beginning, he is completely clear and fathomable to himself: He knows himself so well. And as the play goes on, he becomes unrecognizable to himself. It's a fear we all have."

Even preteens, apparently. Before the class, I sat with Brown, Maiuri and Kelly on the back porch of the teacher's nearby house. Brown says he first wanted to play Othello when he was in the eighth grade in Tennessee, but some local parents objected to the mixed-race theme.

"I'm with middle-schoolers trying to do this play," says Maiuri. "When we first looked at it, I thought, Oh, this is *really* adult. It's about marital jealousy; do I need them to grapple with that? But their insights have been amazing." They're a mixed-race group—black, white, brown and Asian—typical of the East Bay's public schools. "One kid told me, 'My dad says when I'm out with people, this is the expectation: You have to be twice as good as everyone else.' They brought up police brutality; they brought up Trayvon Martin; they brought up domestic violence. They made connections without a lot of prompting from me."

Those sort of connections are what Kelly was hoping for when she began the program, with support from the Walter and Elise Haas Foundation. (In California's public schools, as in much of the nation, support for the arts is on the verge of extinction.) "Empathy is key to any experience



of art," she says. "When we humans encounter social conflict, we flee to one of our most primitive responses—which is prejudice. How might this play out in thinking about Shakespeare?"

Brown, who now works with at-risk young men who've been in trouble with the law, believes the playacting violence of Shakespeare has the potential to prevent the real kind. "They're less likely to cross that line between impulse and action," he says. "Arts can do that for young people."

He got his first taste of acting at Solano State Prison in 2014. A program called Shakespeare for Social Justice, started by Marin Shakespeare's Robert and Lesley Currier at San Quentin in 2003, was looking for men who wanted to perform *Macbeth* for their fellow inmates. "I was looking for the smallest role in the play," says Brown. Instead the Curriers cast him as Macduff, one of the play's heroes, who responds to the news that his family has been murdered by saying, "I must feel it as a man."

Lesley Currier recalls the prisoners doing an exercise related to one of *Macbeth's* themes: What does it mean to be a man? It was a sim-

**"PLEASE DON'T TELL
ANYONE WHAT WE
DID TODAY!"**

ple call and response, in which one inmate asks another, "Are you a man?" and the other responds, "Yes, I'm a man," with each giving their lines a slightly different reading each time.

"He had so much passion and vulnerability and depth of feeling [in just doing that exercise] that I thought, This guy should be Macduff," she says.

The crimes Brown committed cannot be minimized. In 1993, a jury in San Jose, California, convicted him of torturing his 3-year-old daughter and endangering the health of two other young children. He admitted to whipping his children, starting at the age of 2, and said at the time that he did not think that was too young—

or that his form of punishment was torture. That 3-year-old girl “is now permanently and extensively disabled and disfigured,” according to court documents. Brown was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.

Brown told an examining psychiatrist, “I feel horrible. No matter what I accomplish, I will never be whole because I took away their innocence.”

A TERRIFYING LOOK

Innocence is often a relative term in prison; many inmates will tell you they have been falsely accused or unfairly convicted, and even those who readily admit to their crimes will offer extenuating circumstances. There are layers of denial and defensiveness that aren't easily penetrated.

“We have exercises where we ask actors to just look into each other's eyes,” says Currier. “That can be terrifying for someone in prison: If you look too long into someone else's eyes, that person might react with violence. We have many classes where someone will say, ‘Please don't tell anyone what we did today! What happens in this room—don't take it out into the yard!’”

Currier heard of two members of her class—one black, one white—practicing their lines in the yard when a friend of the black inmate came up and said, “What are you doing talking to that white guy?”

“We're studying Shakespeare,” the black actor answered.

“Oh, Shakespeare!” his accuser responded. “That's OK.”

The acting exercises they did together “got people vulnerable,” says Brown, “so suddenly two men who viewed each other with deep suspicion and distrust for decades now see what they've never seen in one another. You see this soft, human moment and the flash in the eyes, the light: It must feel good to get this mask off for a minute. And when you see that, you can't unknow what you know. Then you start to see the human.”

“When inmates have the opportunity to do programs like this, it makes the entire prison safer,” says Currier. The trust exercises help, but examining the material leads to self-examination, too. In the case of *Macbeth*, inmates discussed the nature of crime: Why does someone choose to break the law?

What are the unintended consequences?

“I've met a lot of people who feel that going to prison has given them the opportunity to reflect on their lives, think about what they really want to do, whether it's behind bars or outside,” she continues. “Many of them also feel an obligation to make up for the pain they've caused in the world.”

Typically, the men in the Shakespeare for Social Justice program study their play for eight months before giving one performance for their peers. Dressed in improvised costumes, and using pool cues for swords, Brown and his fellow actors wowed their audience of fellow inmates,

ROCK OTHELLO: Brown says inmates are surprisingly literate: “When you have nothing to read but Shakespeare, you read the hell out of it.”

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many of whom knew the play. “You’d be surprised at how educated prison populations are,” he says. “Time gives you the benefit of a lot of things, and sometimes when you have nothing to read but Shakespeare, you read the hell out of it. There are people in there who, when they found out I was doing *Macbeth*, would come up and do a monologue!”

After Brown was released, he got in touch with Currier. He already had a job with a group he had begun to work with in prison, Oakland’s Community Works West, counseling people the court believes are salvageable. She took him to a Marin Shakespeare production of *Richard III* and afterward her husband, who’d directed the play, introduced Brown to the audience and said, jokingly, “Maybe we can get him up on stage to play Othello!”

His auditions went well, though there were concerns. “Could he do it?” says Lesley Currier. “He’d done one play in his life, one performance of one play. He was living in transitional housing, had no car and was just reconnecting with his family. And then there was the question of if our board of directors would approve of us hiring a former inmate.”

Brown’s debut garnered a lot of local press and toward the end of the play’s two-week run, she started to hear from theatergoers who had reservations. “I think it was their misunderstanding of the nature of his crimes,” says Currier. (The words *child torture* have that effect.) His fellow actors, meanwhile, offered advice and support. “Everyone came to know him and his story,” she adds. “Just him doing this role, and doing it so extraordinarily well, was sending a message out into the world about the potential of the millions of people incarcerated right now.”

The ex-convict invited some of the young men he works with to come see him perform. “For some, coming to see the play was the first time they’d been to Marin County,” says Currier, “or the first time they’d ever seen a play. There’s still ripple effects for the work we do in prison.”

Meanwhile, Kelly was launching her school program and was thrilled to see that there were two productions of *Othello* in the Bay Area that fall: The students could compare and contrast. “I didn’t know any of Dameion’s backstory,” says Kelly. “I was just interested in having Othello come to school.” The high school class he met with first was not that interested in his prison time, either, she says. “They all wanted to know, ‘What’s your workout routine?’”

Some of the discussions she has had with middle and high school students about Shakespeare mirror those that take place in the prison pro-



gram. (Three years ago, Shakespeare for Social Justice received a grant from the state’s department of corrections; they expect to expand the program to eight state prisons next year.) The idea of masks, for instance: That resonates with students as well as convicts. “As we get older, we become more aware of the masks we put on to go out into the world, or the masks we put on to go home,” says Kelly. Many of the big themes that reverberate through Shakespeare’s plays—the meaning of identity, the importance of responsibility, the danger of the precondi-

“WHY THE HELL ARE THESE YOUNG PEOPLE BEING BROUGHT UP TO KILL EACH OTHER?”

tioned response—matter as much in the school cafeteria as they do on the prison yard. Breaking the cycle of violence, for instance. “It’s the very question at the heart of *Romeo and Juliet*,” says Kelly. “Why the hell are these young people being brought up to kill each other?”

Surrounded by middle-school students, Brown tells them a final, fabulous tale. In the wake of the publicity he received for playing Othello, a younger brother (Brown is one of 12 siblings) said a stranger had contacted him saying he was their long-lost father. Dameion was skeptical.

“I wanted it to be true, but I knew it wasn’t true,” he told the class. He called the man, and asked him questions only their father could know and the stranger answered seven out of eight of them correctly—he knew Brown had fallen through a frozen pond and a dog named King had rescued him. The man then sent him a photograph of himself and Brown declared, “That’s Dad.” The call, it seems, was coincidental and had nothing to do with the press.

Hearing the story, Kelly says, “Shakespeare is all about these miracles.” **N**



YALE, SHMALE!

The new season of *Gilmore Girls* is the best argument for public schools or even online universities

IN SEASON 5 of *Gilmore Girls*, publishing magnate Mitchum Huntzberger sits down aspiring journalist Rory Gilmore, an intern at his *Stamford Eagle-Gazette*, and gives her an unsolicited performance review. “I’ve worked with a lot of young people over the years,” says Huntzberger, the father of Rory’s boyfriend at Yale, Logan. “Interns, new hires. I’ve got a pretty good gut sense for people’s strengths and weaknesses.... And I’ve to got to tell you, you don’t got it.”

Bam! Print it!

As a fan of the show, you may have loathed the Huntzberger lion, but as a journalist, I respect his bluntness. As withering as his review sounded more than a decade ago, when that episode first aired, he was right. Rory is bad at journalism, as the four episodes of the recently released Netflix series *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life* illustrate. Never mind deadlines; she cannot even handle a paper route.

In the new episodes, we see Rory, once the editor-in-chief of the *Yale Daily News*, bomb job interviews. She falls asleep while interviewing one source and sleeps with another. She lobbies for a non-paying job as editor-in-chief of the *Stars Hollow Gazette*, where she fails to break any stories (“Steampunks Invade Stars Hollow!”) but drinks hooch at her desk during lunch hour. (You have to write like *The New York Times*’s David Carr before you can behave like David Carr.) When it comes time to deliver the first *Gazette* published

under her stewardship, Rory demonstrates that she does not even know the east side from the west side of Stars Hollow: the town in which she was born and raised, not to mention her new beat.

RORY: “You take the west side of town, I’ll take the east.”

LORELAI: “Got it.”

RORY: “Where you going?”

LORELAI: “That’s west.”

RORY: “That’s east.”

LORELAI: “That’s west.”

RORY: “It’s not. See, Eastside Dental. It’s east.”

LORELAI: “And the name of the dentist at Eastside Dental is...”

RORY: “...Dr. Eastside. Holy cow, I just put that together?”

Print is not dead. It just has a horrible sense of direction.

Eleven years after the end of the original series, the *Gilmore Girls* reboot opens with Rory having just flown across the Atlantic and fielding a call from *The Atlantic*. She is also basking in the glow of her “Talk of the Town” piece in *The New Yorker*, which Stars Hollow diner owner Luke Danes has reprinted on the back of his menu. But, like many of the news stories we read on Facebook, this tale is a partial lie. Rory’s trans-Atlantic travels are little more than London booty-calling, and *The Atlantic* phoned only to inform freelancer Rory that her story is being held.

Before long, we begin to think of Rory less as a

BY
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INK-STAINED, WRETCHED: Rory Gilmore has big dreams about a career in journalism, but lacks some of the necessary attributes.

journalist and more as a wizard. She is working on a book, but has no advance. Working at a newspaper, though she has no salary. Traveling back and forth to London so casually that it may as well be New London, Connecticut. Rory's grandmother, Emily Gilmore, is the last objective and discerning judge in Rory's orbit (she should write op-ed columns for her granddaughter's paper). "You're homeless!" Emily declares, and she's right.

Early in the first new episode, Rory's mother, Lorelai, is awakened to the sound of tap dancing in the kitchen. Rory explains that she has taken up tap to relieve stress, but of course it is also a metaphor. The erstwhile golden child of Stars Hollow and Chilton Prep is tap dancing through life. She claims to have many "irons in the fire," but unlike the plethora of quirky supporting characters who populate her hometown, she has no hearth. She has no idea in what direction she's headed, even when she's not delivering the *Gazette*.

Even with her Yale degree, Rory's instincts are poor. Huntzberger arranges for her to interview with the editor-in-chief of *GQ*, and she cannot even Ginger Rogers her way through it. She allows herself to be compared to David Foster Wallace, which is like attending a medical school interview and casually claiming skills akin to Jonas Salk's.

When Rory finally lands a story assignment—on spec—about the phenomenon of people standing in lines for whatever is trendy, she launches into an interview without any foreplay

banter. Lorelai, who has tagged along, is more of a natural at conversing with people. (Note: Many writers are notoriously poor at face-to-face conversations.) Later, Lorelai and Rory happen upon a trio of men who they believe are at the head of a line, only to learn that the suits are simply eating

PRINT IS NOT DEAD. IT JUST HAS A HORRIBLE SENSE OF DIRECTION.

lunch on a stairwell. The line has formed behind them. (There's the kicker for your story, Rory!)

Instead of pursuing that angle, Rory ventures out for beers with a few sources (good job) and then sleeps with the one who was dressed as a wookiee (poor job). The next day, Rory arrives for a job interview at Sandee Says expecting a coronation. What a blow to her ego to have a contemporary who is clearly forging a more direct path to making one of those "40 Under 40" lists tell her she's not worthy. "Get a better attitude!" Sandee says, and she too is right. Next time we see Rory, she is back at the worldwide headquarters of the *Stars Hollow Gazette*, pouring herself a liquid lunch and throwing a self-pity party.

For all the accolades Rory has received over the years, she is, at 32, fragile. Still closer to girlhood than womanhood and still rudderless. The town's resident half-wit, Kirk (rhymes with quirk), is a better filmmaker than Rory is a journalist. Emily, whose meltdown at the Daughters of the American Revolution meeting was the zenith of the Netflix revival, has a far more trenchant voice.

Even when Rory finally finds her purpose, banging out the first three chapters of a memoir, she desperately needs a copy editor. She presents her manuscript, *The Gilmore Girls*, to Lorelai, who opts not to read beyond the cover page but says, "Take out the *The Gilmore Girls*. It's cleaner."

That and every other Rory moment in this revival is the best advertisement for state schools or online universities you will ever see.

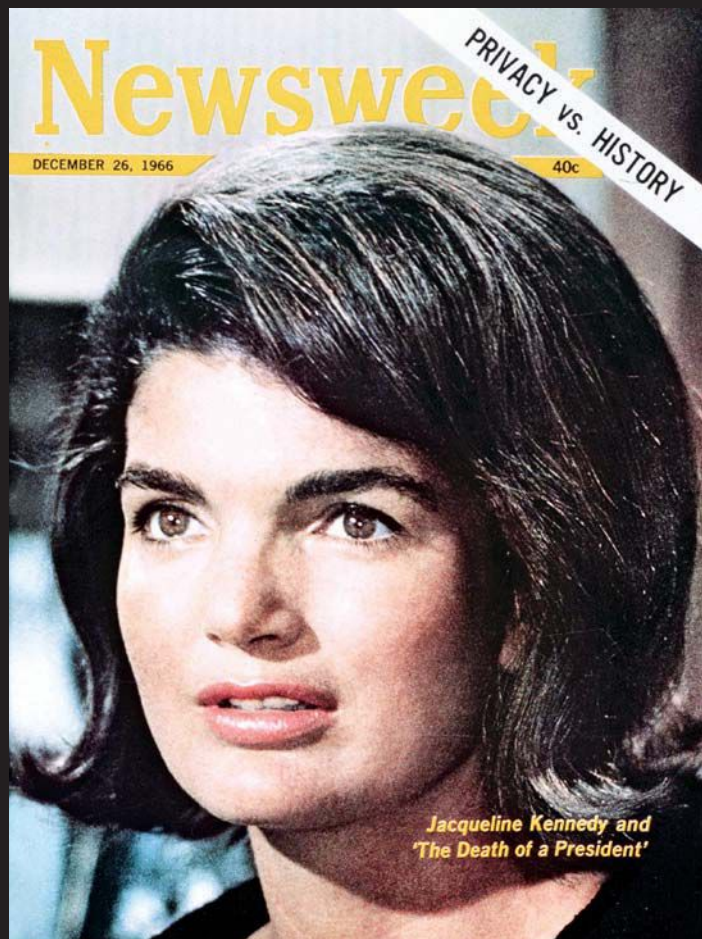
At last, we come to the final scene, which we will not spoil here other than to say that Rory is given the last line, a shocking revelation of just two words. And with that, Huntzberger's evaluation of 11 years earlier is fully validated. Because Rory, with that confession, committed one of the cardinal sins of journalism: She buried the lede! **N**

REWIND

50
YEARS

DECEMBER 26, 1966

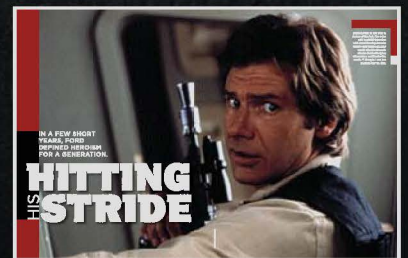
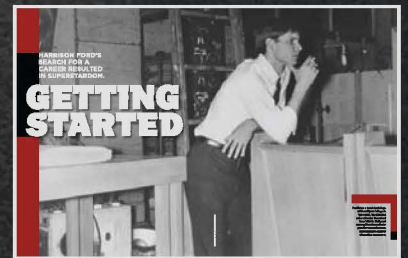
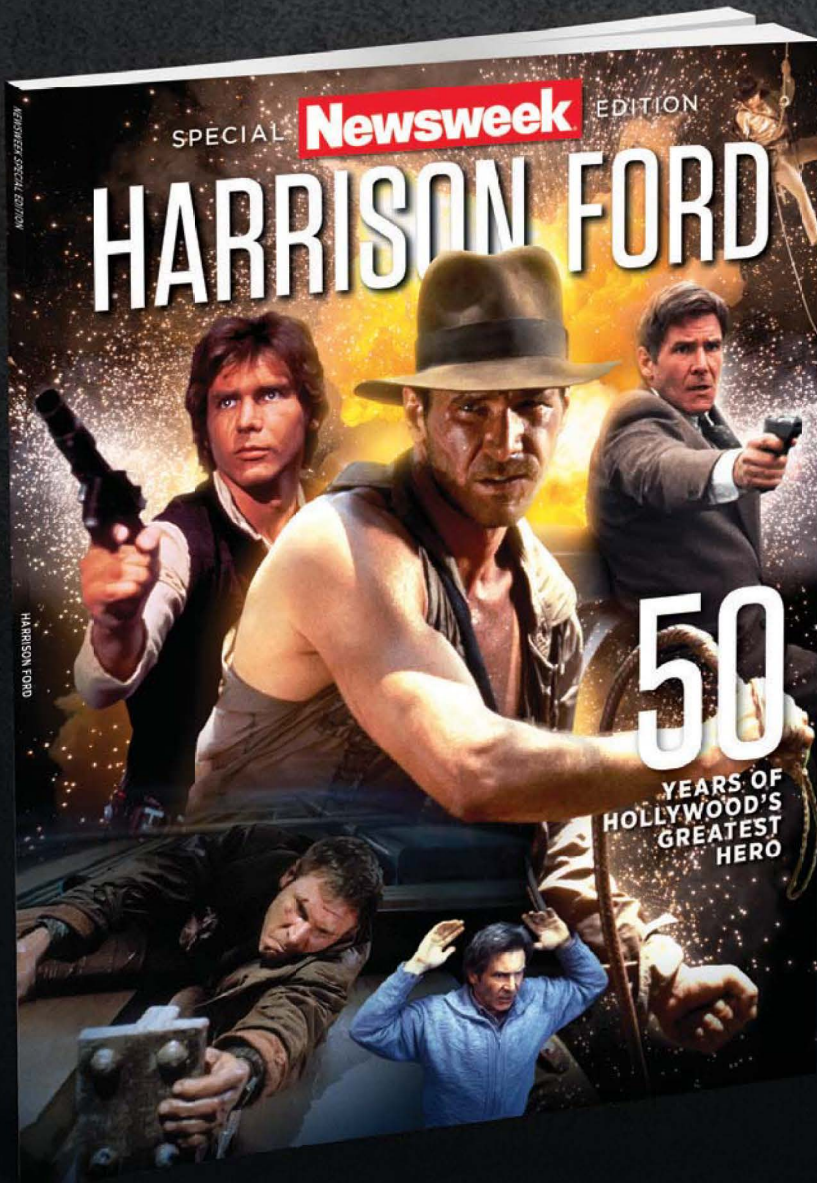
QUOTING STOKELY CARMICHAEL, THE NEWLY CHOSEN CHAIRMAN OF THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE, IN "THE BLACK-POWER BROKERS"



“This
country is
racist
from

top to bottom,
right to left.”

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