

# Eye on the World

## April 6, 2019

This compilation of material for "Eye on the World" is presented as a service to the Churches of God. The views stated in the material are those of the writers or sources quoted by the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Church of God Big Sandy. The following articles were posted at [churchofgodbigandy.com](http://churchofgodbigandy.com) for the weekend of April 6, 2019.

**Compiled by Dave Havir**

**Luke 21:34-36**—"But take heed to yourselves, lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence, and drunkenness, or the anxieties of this life, and that day come on you suddenly, like a falling trap; for it will come on all dwellers on the face of the whole earth. But beware of slumbering; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man" (Weymouth New Testament).



An article by Michael Peck titled "Syria Threatens to Unleash Tunnel Warfare Against Israel" was posted at [nationalinterest.org](http://nationalinterest.org) on March 31, 2019. Following is the article.

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First, it was Hamas, and then Hezbollah.

Now, Syria is threatening to undermine Israel with tunnels.

In fact, a Syrian general claims that the Syrian Civil War has turned Syrian soldiers into "experts" at digging holes in the ground.

"I can tell you that as experts on tunnel warfare, we have made large strides during this crisis, throughout the years of the war," Brigadier-General Lu'ayy Shehadeh told Hezbollah TV network Al-Manar.

In its seventy-five-year history, the Syrian military has rarely had a reputation for being expert in anything. But fighting the Islamic State, which has used underground fortifications extensively, has given the Syrian Arab Army—the official name of the Syrian ground forces—a bloody lesson in subterranean warfare.

And not just Syrian government soldiers: American soldiers and U.S.-backed Syrian, Iraqi and Kurdish fighters have had immense difficulty rooting out ISIS from labyrinthine tunnel complexes in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

Subterranean passages enable ISIS fighters to avoid air strikes and artillery fire, escape encirclement, and allow them to pop out of the ground to spring ambushes.

Such masterful teachers have passed on their expertise to the Syrian army.

“We recently reached a point where our fighters can dig high-quality tunnels in any surroundings, in any conditions, and to any depth,” Shehadeh said in the video, which was translated into English by MEMRI, a pro-Israel research group.

“We have reached a point where the Syrian fighter’s expertise in tunnel warfare is very high, and his technical equipment and gear are very advanced. I won’t expose anything, but all this equipment is made locally, and this is very important. We relied on imported equipment, but the most useful equipment was local.”

Shehadeh, who belongs to the Syrian army’s engineering corps, made clear where the new tunnel warfare expertise would be directed.

“Allah willing, we’ve reached a level that will serve us in the main and real conflict. As I’ve told you, we believed right from the start that [the Syrian Civil War] would end. But the conflict [with Israel] is still on. The real war is still on.”

“We are ready to wage tunnel warfare both defensively and offensively—and offensively in particular.”

The Syrian vow comes as the Israeli military itself prepares to combat tunnel warfare. Hamas has dug tunnels to infiltrate into Southern Israel from Gaza, which have been used to stage attacks and kidnap Israeli soldiers.

Israel recently discovered several elaborate tunnels dug by Hezbollah into northern Israel, spurring fears that Hezbollah would use tunnels for a surprise attack to seize Israeli towns on the Lebanese border.

If the Syrian army is, in fact, preparing to wage tunnel warfare, then this opens a new front on the Golan Heights, which has quiet since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. I recently had a chance to observe Israel Defense Forces (IDF) exercises in the Golan Heights, which focused on a potential conflict with Hezbollah, which is now operating in Syria.

A major part of the maneuvers, conducted by the 188th Armored Brigade, was practicing tactics to destroy Hezbollah tunnels, which the Lebanese group—and Iranian proxy—used with devastating effect to ambush Israeli tanks and troops in the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War.

With Iranian and Hezbollah troops now in Syria, the IDF was already reckoning on the possibility of the Golan Heights becoming yet another war zone on Israel’s frontier. That fact that the Syrian army might join in the digging probably won’t be much of a shock.



An article by Patrick Goodenough titled "Arab League Unites in Opposition to Trump's Golan Heights Proclamation" was posted at cnsnews.com on April 1, 2019. Following is the article.

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President Trump's proclamation recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights won the blanket condemnation Sunday of the Arab bloc, including from leaders who have sided with Trump's effort to counter Iran's influence in the region.

The leaders who met in Tunis for the 30th Arab League summit also reiterated the "centrality" of the Palestinian issue for the grouping, declaring that "the achievement of peace, stability and security in the Middle East region hinges upon reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian cause and the entire Arab-Israeli conflict."

On the question of the Golan Heights, which the international community regards as occupied Syrian territory, the summit's communique called Trump's decision "illegal in letter and spirit" and a "flagrant violation of U.N. Charter."

Trump's March 25 proclamation cited "unique circumstances," making it appropriate to recognize Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, which it captured from Syria in 1967 and annexed in 1981.

Those circumstances included the ridge's history as a springboard for Syrian artillery attacks on Israeli civilian communities, and aggressive actions today by the Assad regime's close allies, Iran and Hezbollah, which "continue to make the Golan Heights a potential launching ground for attacks on Israel."

The proclamation argued that "any possible future peace agreement in the region must account for Israel's need to protect itself from Syria and other regional threats."

Although the Saudis, Emiratis and others share Trump's aversion for the regime in Iran and its regional activities—including its support for the Assad regime, which was suspended from the Arab League in 2011—there was little sign in Tunis of erosion in the traditional Arab solidarity vis-à-vis Israel.

"The U.S. decision does not alter the legal status of the Syrian Golan Heights as a territory occupied by Israel since 1967, nor does it have any legal capacity, obligations or privileges," the leaders said.

They instructed Arab foreign ministries "to employ all political, diplomatic and legal tools in opposing the U.S. recognition," assigned Kuwait, which is currently a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, to submit a draft condemnatory resolution, and discussed getting the International Court of Justice to issue a judgment declaring Trump's order null and void.

The principle of "land for peace" has been central to Mideast diplomacy for decades. But Trump's approach to tackling conflicts that have long stymied his predecessors has seen numerous conventions cast aside, and Arab gov-

ernments worry this may apply too when his administration unveils its long-awaited Mideast peace proposal.

Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas complained at the summit that the Trump administration's decisions were a radical change from those of previous administrations, and marked the end of the U.S. role as Mideast peace mediator.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi stressed in his speech that "the liberation of all Arab occupied territories is the only way to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict," making clear that included returning the Golan to Syria, Egypt's state-owned Al-Ahram reported.

In his speech, as reported by the official Saudi Press Agency, Saudi King Salman said, "We reiterate our total rejection of any measures that would infringe Syrian sovereignty over the Golan."

Also taking part in the summit as guests, both European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and U.N. secretary-general Antonio Guterres expressed concern at Trump's Golan announcement.

The Palestinian cause has long been a unifying factor for the Arab League, one area its 22 members tended to agree upon even when squabbling over other issues.

This year's summit witnessed the early exit of the emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, before giving a scheduled address.

He did so after Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul-Gheit in his speech accused Iran and Turkey of creating new problems in the region, and exacerbating existing ones.

Arab media outlets interpreted Al-Thani's abrupt departure to unhappiness about the criticism of Iran and Turkey.

The two non-Arab regional players have been supportive of Qatar during a two-year dispute with the Saudis, Emiratis, and others over alleged support for terrorism.

Qatar's state news agency confirmed Al-Thani's departure, but gave no reason.

Since its formation shortly after the Second World War, the Arab League has often been dogged by disputes among members, disagreeing over conflicts including civil strife in Yemen, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait—condemned by only 12 of the 20 members present at an emergency summit—Syria's intervention in Lebanon, the Darfur crisis in Sudan, and 2003 Iraq War, and the ongoing Syrian civil war.

Even the Arab-Israeli conflict, while central to the Arab League's agenda, gave rise to some disputes. Egypt was suspended in 1979 after President Anwar Sadat signed a peace agreement with Israel, and was only readmitted a decade later.



A Reuters article by Miguel Angel Gutierrez, Lizbeth Diaz and Dave Graham titled "Mexico President Says Illegal Immigration to U.S. 'Not Up to Us' " was posted at reuters.com on March 28, 2019. Following is the article.

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Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said on Thursday [March 28] tackling illegal immigration is an issue chiefly for the United States and Central America to address, as a senior Mexican official called U.S. policy on migration “bipolar.”

Speaking after renewed criticism by his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump on Twitter, Lopez Obrador said Mexico would help to check the flow of migrants heading north, but that his country was no longer the main driver of the phenomenon.

Migrants illegally crossing the U.S. border have caused persistent bilateral tension ever since Trump launched his bid for the presidency almost four years ago, saying that Mexico was sending rapists and drug runners into the United States.

With initial campaigning for the 2020 U.S. presidential election already under way, Trump sent out a tweet earlier on Thursday that again attacked Mexico over migration.

“Mexico is doing NOTHING to help stop the flow of illegal immigrants to our Country,” Trump tweeted. “They are all talk and no action. Likewise, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador have taken our money for years, and do Nothing.”

Trump also threatened to close the U.S. southern border.

Lopez Obrador was asked during his regular morning news conference about Trump’s tweet, and said he was focused on addressing the root causes of migration.

“We respect president Trump’s position, and we are going to help. That is, this is a problem of the United States, or it’s a problem of the Central American countries. It’s not up to us Mexicans, no,” Lopez Obrador told reporters.

“I just emphasize that migration flows of Mexicans to the United States are very low, a lot lower,” he said. “The Mexican is no longer seeking work in the United States. The majority are inhabitants of our fellow Central American countries.”

Separately, Tonatiuh Guillen, head of Mexico’s National Migration Institute, said at an event in Mexico City the country was caught between U.S. policies that on the one hand were very tough, but on the other, held out the prospect of asylum.

“There’s . . . a government structure of bipolar migration policy,” he said. “There are factors of attraction and rejection, and we’re in the sandwich right now.”

Trump’s latest broadside followed calls on social media for another new caravan of migrants to form in Honduras.

His comments came one day after the United States, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador agreed to conduct joint police operations in Central America to improve border security and tackle illegal immigration.

The three Central American countries account for the bulk of migrants apprehended trying to cross illegally into the United States.

Over the weekend, a group of around 1,200 migrants, most of them from Central America, began moving toward the U.S. border from southern Mexico.



“Eye on the World” comment: The following list of articles consists of headlines of extra articles, which are considered international. The articles were not posted, but the headlines give the essence of the story.

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- An article titled “Israel Military Beefs Up Presence on Gaza Border” was posted at [apnews.com](http://apnews.com) on March 28, 2019.
  - An article by Anna Ahronheim and Tamar Beeri titled “40,000 Palestinians Protest Along Gaza Border Marking Land Day” was posted at [jpost.com](http://jpost.com) on March 30, 2019.
  - An article by Karin Laub and Fares Akram titled “ Hamas Tightens Grip on Gaza, Fails to Break Israel Blockade” was posted at [apnews.com](http://apnews.com) on April 1, 2019.
  - An article by David Fickling titled “Saudi Arabia’s Gas Tank Is Running Low [with One-Third of Middle East’s Oil Reserves, but Just 10 Percent of It’s Gas]” was posted at [bloomberg.com](http://bloomberg.com) on April 2, 2019.
  - An article by Javier Blas titled “The Biggest Saudi Oil Field [Ghawar] Is Fading Faster Than Anyone Guessed” was posted at [bloomberg.com](http://bloomberg.com) on April 2, 2019.
  - A Reuters article titled “Brexit in Meltdown: Theresa May Under Pressure to Forge Softer Divorce Deal” was posted at [reuters.com](http://reuters.com) on March 31, 2019.
  - A Reuters article titled “U.S. Readying Sanctions on Russia Over Nerve-Agent Attack in Britain: Bloomberg” was posted at [reuters.com](http://reuters.com) on March 29, 2019.
  - An article titled “Venezuelans Take to the Streets After Another Round of Blackouts” was posted at [bloomberg.com](http://bloomberg.com) on March 30, 2019.
  - A Reuters article by Deisy Buitrago titled “Venezuelans Set Up Burning Barricades Over Lack of Power, Water” was posted at [reuters.com](http://reuters.com) on March 31, 2019.
  - An article by Margioni Bermudez titled “Top Venezuelan Court Tightens Noose on Opposition Chief Guaido” was posted at [yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com) on April 1, 2019.
  - An article by Ethan Bronner, Alex Vasquez and David Wainer titled “How Has Maduro Survived? With Lots of Help From Cuban Operatives” was posted at [bloomberg.com](http://bloomberg.com) on April 1, 2019.
  - A Reuters article by Orhan Coskun and Can Sezer titled “Erdogan on Track to Lose Turkey’s Biggest Cities [Istanbul and Ankara] in Shock Poll” was posted at [reuters.com](http://reuters.com) on April 1, 2019.
  - An article titled “Ruling Party Objects to Vote [Count of Mayoral Election] in Turkey’s Capital” was posted at [apnews.com](http://apnews.com) on April 1, 2019.
  - An article titled “Japan’s Emperor Akihito Ends Reign Marked by Modernization” was posted at [yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com) on April 1, 2019.

■ An article by Charley Triballeau titled “ ‘Cow Toilets’ in Netherlands Aim to Cut E-Moo-Ssions” was posted at msn.com on March 30, 2019.



An article by Derek Hunter titled “When Truth Doesn’t Matter” was posted at townhall.com on March 28, 2019. Following is the article.

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It’s a weird time in American history. The truth no longer matters. Not the subjective truth of what you think is the best beer or who makes the best hamburger, but the objective truth of what is or is not a fact.

It’s not that objective truth doesn’t exist, it most certainly does, it’s that so many people, particularly on the political left, no longer care what that objective truth is.

The “Russia collusion” story didn’t invent the concept of two different realities, especially in politics, but nothing exposed it more than the 2-plus year witch hunt.

Like the constellations in the stars, which can be made into anything when there are millions of them, people seeing what they want to see is nothing new. What is new is the idea that people deny what is unambiguously right in front of them because they either don’t like it or have too much invested in something else.

When word came down last weekend that there was no collusion between Russian agents and anyone remotely associated with the 2016 Trump campaign, worlds were rocked.

CNN, MSNBC, and their fellow travelers in print form genuinely did not expect that to be the case. They’d spent those years swearing to their audiences it would be the case. Thus, one could understand why they’d immediately start the Küber-Ross stages of grief. Only they seem to be stuck on step one.

■ The first stage of grief is “denial.” It’s natural, no one wants to accept loss, but that’s all these so-called adults have.

■ They’ve dabbled in stage two, anger, but only in the context of people mentioning the truth they’re in the throes of denying. It’s really bizarre. More than that, it’s dangerous.

How does anyone work with or trust people unwilling to admit the Sun rises in the East?

The queen of collusion has been Rachel Maddow, the MSNBC host known for Muppet-like gyrations and mugging for the camera straight out of the silent film era. Friday, when the report was submitted and it was known no more indictments would be forthcoming, Maddow interrupted her fishing vacation in Tennessee to demonstrate what shock looks like on live television. By Monday, denial had fully taken hold.

“Whatever information (Barr) just received from Robert Mueller about the president’s behavior as it pertains to potential criminal obstruction of justice, Barr could have just passed that information onto (Congress) for them to decide what to do with it,” Maddow said.

“But instead, somewhat inexplicably, he decided to take it upon himself to declare definitively, ‘Yeah, you know, I looked at all that stuff, and I can tell you there is no crime there, it’s fine.’ ”

You’d almost expect the digging in of heels from the people who’d been on camera or had bylines for two years putting their names to the, and I’m being overly generous here, falsehood. They’re the ones who told the lies as if they were gospel, and they’re the ones who have to find a way to convince their audiences they weren’t lying at all.

But you’d expect management to sing a slightly different tune, to exhibit some introspection about how they’d so thoroughly soiled their sheets and credibility. Not full self-flagellation, but an admission they needed to do better in the future.

Nope.

■ Jeff Zucker, the brains behind the oldest and least-watched brand in cable news, sees blame, but elsewhere.

“We are not investigators. We are journalists, and our role is to report the facts as we know them, which is exactly what we did,” he told *The New York Times*. No outlet had more corrections, retractions, and “mistakes” than CNN, yet the captain of the once-respected Titanic of cable news is blaming the iceberg for not swerving.

■ Dean Baquet, the man who runs *The Times*, absolved his paper of any and all responsibility as well.

“It’s not our job to determine whether or not there was illegality,” he said. He seems unaware of the contacts his reporters have with CNN and MSNBC and how they routinely shared rumors and their wrong opinions through their other jobs. You can’t be an activist and a journalist simultaneously, they’re contradictory professions.

None of these people can admit they did anything wrong because they’re in denial about the president not having done anything illegal. The new mantra of the left is “We need to see the whole report and all the supporting documents.” This isn’t from a desire to read millions of pages of evidence, it’s to delay the inevitable.

Dozens of FBI agents and 19 lawyers worked on the Mueller investigation, if they’d found a smoking gun or something that contradicts what Attorney General William Barr wrote in his summary you can be certain someone would have called a friendly journalist to contradict it. The phones have not rung.

There is no incentive for denialists to accept the objective truth, only downside. Their narrative of collusion is so engrained in their worldview that even after the conclusions of the Mueller Report were known, fully 48 percent of

respondents still told Reuters "Trump or someone from his campaign worked with Russia to influence the 2016 election."

That is down 6 percentage points from the previous week, but it's also a testament to just how deep the denial runs. No amount of truth is going to sway people away from a lie they desperately want to believe.

If the audience lied to doesn't demand better from the people who deceived them because they so desperately want the lies to be true, there is no incentive to do better in the future.

That objective truth means the greatest political fraud of the 21st century is likely to only hold that title for a very short time.



An article by Laretta Brown titled "Rand Paul Blocks Resolution Calling for Release of Mueller Report" was posted at townhall.com on March 29, 2019. Following is the article.

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Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) blocked a resolution Thursday that called for the public release of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report after Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), a 2020 presidential hopeful, asked for unanimous consent in the Senate for the resolution. The measure passed the House by a 420-0 vote last month.

"We still have not seen the report," Klobuchar said on the Senate floor. "I have urged the Department of Justice to release the report, and the administration should not delay in producing the report to Congress."

Sen. Paul objected to Klobuchar's motion, arguing that "we all want transparency," but he would like the communications of officials in the Obama administration to be released first, including those of former CIA Director John Brennan and Former FBI Director James Comey, in relation to the beginning of the Russia probe.

"We need to know was there malfeasance, was there misuse of power, did President Obama's administration get involved in an election to infiltrate the Trump campaign to trap them?" he said. "What we need to discover and we do not yet know: Was President Obama involved?"

This is the third time Senate Republicans have blocked the resolution to release the Mueller report, which was turned over to the Department of Justice last week.

"We will agree to see the Mueller report as long as the other side will agree to show us the communications that took place in deciding to promote this fake allegation against the president and whether there was misuse of their office," Paul said on the Senate floor Thursday. "We based this investigation on a lie, we should investigate who the liars were."



An article by Burt Prelutsky titled “Debating With the Demented” was posted at patriot.us on March 30, 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

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I don’t mind debating with Democrats, but they rarely read my stuff and I certainly don’t go out of my way to seek them out. So, usually I don’t hear from them unless they’re one of the few Leftists who read the two pieces a week that The Patriot Post runs.

Every so often I hear from a woman who used to write occasional pieces for the *L.A. Times* back in the day that I was writing a humor column for the paper.

Mary generally sends me an email when I defend Donald Trump. It’s annoying, but at least it gives me personal insight to the bullheadedness I otherwise would only get second-hand when I see the zoo of creatures vying for their party’s presidential nomination on TV.

The other day, she reacted to my article, “Donald Trump Is the Life of the Party,” in which I listed the reasons why, politics aside, so many people like the President. I referred to his obvious love of life, of family and of America.

#### ■ Mary’s letter

Mary opened with: “Burt, I can’t imagine why you think Trump is doing anything good for this country. He’s created an ugly and divisive climate that should be obvious to anyone who’s intellectually honest. Do you honestly think he’s honest? Please. He lies constantly.

“He’s destroyed the dignity of the presidency by his bizarre behavior and often incoherent rants. I don’t see how my objections to his lack of basic civility and decency can be dismissed as minor matters. But then, I don’t know what you mean when you refer to ‘my side.’ I’m a socialist now but grew up in a Republican household. We didn’t talk politics much, but my parents generally liked Ike who would be horrified by Trump.

“My father loved classical music. So did my mom who played the piano. My sister played the cello. I grew up listening to Bach and Beethoven. As a teenager, I dated brilliant guys from Caltech who undoubtedly would believe in global warming today. Let’s just say that this ignorant buffoon who got himself into the Oval Office via the electoral college strikes a discordant note.”

#### ■ Response to Mary

I replied: “You keep ragging on Trump’s manners. I frankly don’t care if he slurps his soup. After the likes of Carter, Clinton and Obama, I really don’t care about the so-called dignity of the office. I care about the issues, such as the Second Amendment, closing the borders, discouraging Muslims from entering this country, the economy, re-building the military, sticking by Israel, getting our NATO partners to live up to their financial obligation; and putting an end to infanticide.

"He calls the press the enemy of the people, as do I. They lie about Trump but defend Hillary Clinton and the Family Foundation. They've become the bullhorn of the Democratic party, pretending that people like Kirsten Gillibrand, Bernie Sanders and Robert O'Rourke, to name just a few of the idiots in the race, are viable contenders for the highest office in the land.

"By 'your side,' I am of course referring to 'Socialists,' a mental disorder you seem happy enough applying to yourself.

"What any of this has to do with your musical taste or who you chose to date 60 years ago, I can't imagine. Bragging, I suppose.

"If you choose to write more about Trump, please leave what you consider his boorishness and tweets out of it, as I have occasionally addressed those matters and don't require you to remind me of what I consider minor matters in the overall scheme of things."

■ Mary added

Her response: "Frankly, I read your stuff trying to understand why a smart Jewish boy liked neo-Nazis such as Trump and others of his ilk, maybe hoping to convert you to a kinder, gentler view of the world. I still don't understand and fortunately, don't need to anymore."

■ Burt added

My reply: "Apparently, it never entered your mind that this nice Jewish boy simply doesn't agree with your assessment of Trump. You folks call him names, including anti-Semite, ignoring the fact that his son-in-law is a religiously-observant Jew, that his beloved daughter Ivanka converted to Judaism and that his three Kushner grandkids are Jewish. He also pledged his undying support of Israel. That's one heck of a neo-Nazi.

"Your side, on the other hand, defends Rep. Ilhan Omar and can't even bring itself to condemn anti-Semitism without watering it down to include an attack on every sort of bigotry, including fat women, bald men and Eskimos.

"Somewhere along the line, you decided that you are my moral and intellectual superior, although you've supplied no evidence to back up that arrogant assumption. I don't object to your disagreeing with me politically, but I take exception to your patronizing attitude.

"Inasmuch as you're not even a subscriber, but merely read two of my seven weekly articles at a free website, I don't feel any obligation to put up with your mindless partisan rants. So, farewell. And don't even think about running back to me next year after Trump trounces one of the morons you support and blaming it on the Russians, the Macedonians or the Electoral College."



An article by Burt Prelutsky titled "Brazile Nuts" was posted at patriotpost.us on April 1, 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

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I didn't take it too much to heart when I heard that Fox News must have beaten out CNN and MSNBC for the on-air services of Donna Brazile.

For one thing, I think that at least a third of Fox's interviewees and panelists are a total waste of time. For another, I only watch Bret Baier and Tucker Carlson, so I assumed I'd be able to avoid Ms. Brazile as easily as I now avoid Juan Williams.

I figured the network would roll her out for some of those tiresome panels that Chris Wallace oversees on Sunday morning, where she'd fit right in with such devout Never-Trumpers as Fred Barnes, Steve Hayes, John Podesta, Mort Kondracke and Karl Rove.

So, imagine my surprise when she popped up on one of Bret Baier's panels. She certainly didn't disappoint. Right off the bat, she credited the upswing in the nation's economy to Barack Obama. If her point had been that he had driven it so far into the ground that the only direction it could go was up, her statement might have had some validity. But it wasn't. She traced the upsurge to Obama's taking office in 2009, and nobody pointed out that her hero had claimed that a 2% rise in the GDP was the new norm. That's because Mollie Hemingway wasn't seated beside her, giving her funny looks and actual facts.

At least, Juan Williams should be grateful. He is no longer the dumbest black person working at Fox. But even as pathetic as he is, he never snuck presidential debate questions to Hillary Clinton.

One old saying that has now gone by the wayside, thanks to Fox signing the lady to a big contract, is that cheaters never prosper. In fact, when it comes to politics and broadcasting, it is virtually a prerequisite.

#### ■ Behavior of Google

Google is a perfect example of the downside to a global economy. At the same time that the outfit refuses to cooperate with the U.S. military, it is only too happy to comply with whatever obligations the Chinese government, with its 1.1 billion potential Google customers, places on it. And because Google has an endless stash of money with which to bribe members of the House and Senate, Congress has little or no incentive to blow the whistle and throw a penalty flag.

#### ■ Don't send the fake quotes

People keep sending me contrived inanities they pretend were uttered by A O-C and I wish they'd stop. For one thing, I don't see the point when the things she has actually said are no less moronic than what they pretend she said.

The fact is, I have never heard anything as ignorant as the stuff she says on a regular basis since the days when people like Maxine Waters used to defend Ebonics as an actual language.



An article by Christina Majaski titled "McDonald's vs. Burger King: What's the Difference?" was posted at investopedia.com on March 26, 2019. Following are excerpts of the article.

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Like PepsiCo, Inc., versus the Coca-Cola Company or Ford Motor Company versus General Motors Company, the battle between McDonald's Corporation (NYSE: MCD) and Burger King represents one of the most iconic and important business rivalries in American history.

For more than 60 years, McDonald's has been the trailblazer that set the standard by which all other franchises operate.

But there are clear signs those roles may be reversing; a revitalized Burger King is forcing McDonald's to adjust to it, not the other way around.

McDonald's and Burger King started in the franchise food business in 1955 and 1953, respectively. McDonald's has always been the larger company, but each firm has unquestionably influenced the other over the course of their six-decade-plus rivalry.

Each restaurant boasts iconic products. Burger King has the Whopper sandwich, and McDonald's counters with the Big Mac and Quarter Pounder. In fact, the Whopper and Big Mac are the two best-selling burgers of all time.

Burger King boasts 2.1 billion whopper sales per year, though it is very difficult to find verification for that figure.

McDonald's suggests a more modest 550 million Big Macs are sold each year.

Each firm continues to push its international presence, although with mixed results. One reason is culture. Many Europeans, for instance, consider fast food to be a quintessentially American tradition.

Food menus for Burger King and McDonald's sometimes struggle to appeal to foreign consumers, leaving international markets underdeveloped, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

#### ■ McDonald's: The Real King of Burgers

McDonald's is the largest fast-food restaurant chain in the United States and represents the largest restaurant company in the world, both in terms of customers served and revenue generated.

Its franchises span 36,000 individual units across nearly 120 countries, employ 1.5 million people including franchisees, and serve more than 65 million meals each year.

Consider that McDonald's could lose half of its sales revenue and still sit in first place comfortably; domestic McDonald's locations brought in \$21 billion

in 2018. Even with slumping growth figures since early 2014, McDonald's sits atop the fast food world.

But slumping figures should concern investors, who have not realized a great return for several years. MCD performed admirably during and immediately after the global recession of 2008–2009.

It turns out cheap fast food is essentially recession-proof, but 2014 was the worst year for the company since 2003.

Under franchising visionary Ray Kroc, McDonald's became the world's premier food brand by selling the rights to operate a McDonald's store.

With this model, MCD keeps overhead costs down and lets local owners deal with individual units, while food costs remain low and service remains fast for a culture increasingly on the go.

Big businesses struggle to grow quickly once they reach a certain size; it is logistically difficult to innovate or address individual business concerns when a burger empire spans 120 countries.

McDonald's CEO Steve Easterbrook gave a presentation to shareholders in Q1 2015 to address concerns over performance. His turnaround strategy included an intentional examination of Burger King's recent success.

While it is not likely McDonald's will be able to slash corporate overhead in half, something Burger King managed to do between 2011 and 2013, it is telling that Easterbrook identified refranchising company-owned restaurants as a way to drive up margins.

[Important: Meaningfully investing in Burger King and McDonald's usually means buying and operating a new franchise unit.]

#### ■ Burger King: A Fast Food Revival

After a very tumultuous and disappointing start to the 21st century, Burger King's shareholders saw The Wendy's Company, Subway, and Starbucks take turns passing them as McDonald's' chief competitor, at least in terms of sales revenue.

Then private equity firm 3G Capital purchased the struggling giant for \$4 billion in 2010, igniting a recovery effort that was quite successful. Burger King merged with Canadian coffee staple Tim Hortons in 2014 to form a new publicly traded company called Restaurant Brands International (RBI).

By Q3 2017, Burger King was outperforming McDonald's and Wendy's by significant margins. A report by Citi Research concluded that 3G Capital made two significant strategic adjustments: trimming business fat and simplifying its public image. It worked, and operating margins grew from 24 percent in Q2 2011 to 36 percent by Q4 2018.

Burger King Worldwide (BKW) generates revenue from three sources. The primary stream comes from franchises, including royalties and fees; royalties

come from a percentage of revenue from each unit. The company formerly leased properties, although 3G Capital has moved away from that, and, as of 2018, all Burger King locations are franchised.

At a time when the McDonald's menu is as complicated as ever, creating record drive-thru wait times, according to Citi Research, Burger King is repackaging or rebranding old items to help consumers out.

One part of the revival strategy is a direct challenge to McDonald's products. In November 2013, Burger King introduced the Big King sandwich, two patties, three buns, and a "special sauce," as a not-so-subtle replication of the successful Big Mac from McDonald's.

When McDonald's brought back the McRib sandwich, Burger King responded by unveiling a \$1 BK BBQ Rib as a cheaper alternative. In 2018 Burger King announced a double quarter pound burger, seen as a direct shot at McDonald's' own quarter pound burger.

Next came a new fleet of coffee products from Burger King to challenge the McCafe menu.

McDonald's made waves years ago by partnering with Starbucks to create a new morning coffee option, so Burger King targeted and acquired Tim Hortons, Inc., the leading Canadian coffee and donut outlet. Stock prices for both companies soared after the \$11 billion deal, including \$3 billion in financing from Warren Buffett.

There is no confusion about Burger King's value proposition. It is just as good as McDonald's, with the same products, just slightly more upscale and, possibly, cheaper.

BK also subtly illuminates McDonald's oft-criticized nutritional value by offering the new "Satisfries," a healthier French fry option with "40 percent less fat and 30 percent fewer calories than the leading French fries." The leading French fries are, of course, McDonald's.

## ■ Franchises

Meaningfully investing in Burger King and McDonald's usually means buying and operating a new franchise unit. Since each company operates on an international level, and no two markets are identical, the easiest way to compare franchising options is to look at Franchise Disclosure Documents (FDDs).

According to the 2017 FDD for McDonald's, the initial investment amount for a McDonald's franchise falls between \$1.008 million and \$2.2 million. The corporation also charges an initial franchise fee ranging from just \$500 up to \$45,000 depending on the type of restaurant unit.

Not surprisingly, Burger King's franchises require similar investments. The 2017 BK FDD suggests that, including the costs of real estate acquisition and improvement, total initial investments fall between \$317,100 and \$3.046 million, with a \$45,000 initial franchise fee.

## ■ Key Takeaways

McDonald's is the largest fast-food restaurant chain in the United States and represents the largest restaurant company in the world.

Burger King's value proposition is just as good as McDonald's.

Meaningfully investing in Burger King and McDonald's usually means buying and operating a new franchise unit.



"Eye on the World" comment: The following list of articles consists of headlines of extra articles, which involve the United States. The articles were not posted, but the headlines give the essence of the story.

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## Deficit

- An article by Terence P. Jeffrey titled "Federal Spending Hits Highest Level Since Bank Bailout and Obama Stimulus" was posted at [cnsnews.com](http://cnsnews.com) on March 26, 2019.

## Finances

- An article by Tyler Durden titled "'As Many As a Million Calves Lost in Nebraska'—Beef Prices to Escalate Dramatically in Coming Months" was posted at [zerohedge.com](http://zerohedge.com) on March 28, 2019.

- An article by Hayley Peterson titled "Walmart Is Quietly Closing [11] Stores" was posted at [businessinsider.com](http://businessinsider.com) on March 30, 2019.

- An article titled "Trump Administration Awards \$1.7 Million Family Planning Grant to Anti-Abortion Group [Obria Group, Which Considers Itself an Anti-Abortion Version of Planned Parenthood]" was posted at [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com) on March 30, 2019.

## Green New Deal

- An article by Dartunorro Clark titled "Ocasio-Cortez: Republicans Made 'Total Fools of Themselves' Attacking the Green New Deal" was posted at [nbcnews.com](http://nbcnews.com) on March 29, 2019.

- An article by Alexander C. Kaufman titled "Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez Defiantly Promises a Green New Deal Congress Can't Refuse" was posted at [huffpost.com](http://huffpost.com) on March 29, 2019.

## Illegal immigration

- An article by Aaron Montes and Rick Jervis titled "'We've Never Seen Anything Like This': As Trump Threatens to Close Border, Migrants Overwhelm Texas Cities" was posted at [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com) on March 30, 2019.

- An article titled "Caravan of 40 Salvadoran Migrants Set Out for US Border" was posted at [apnews.com](http://apnews.com) on March 30, 2019.

■ An article by Jonathan Lemire, Nomaan Merchant and Colleen Long titled "Trump Seeks to Cut Foreign Aid to 3 Central American Nations [El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras]" was posted at apnews.com on March 30, 2019.

### **Comments about weapons**

■ An article by Susan Jones titled "Senate Judiciary Committee Considers How to Balance Gun Rights With Mental Health Concerns" was posted at cnsnews.com on March 26, 2019.

■ An article by Helen Raleigh titled "[25] Colorado Counties Declare Themselves Second Amendment Sanctuaries in Face of Gun-Grabbing Bill" was posted at thefederalist.com on March 29, 2019.

■ An article by Scott McLean titled "This Colorado Sheriff [Steve Reams of Weld County] Is Willing to Go to Jail Rather Than Enforce a Proposed Gun Law" was posted at cnn.com on March 31, 2019.

■ An article by Julia Hollingsworth titled "New Zealand Firearm Buyback Cost Could Reach \$300 Million NZD [Instead of the \$100 to \$200 Million NZD Previously Estimated]" was posted at cnn.com on April 2, 2019.

■ An article by Amy Wadas titled "Pittsburgh City Council Takes Final Vote [6-3], Passes Controversial Gun Legislation [Restrictions on 'Assault Weapons']" was posted at cbstpittsburgh.com on April 2, 2019.

### **Comments about Trump support**

■ An article by Margot Cleveland titled "61 Hacks Who Peddled Russian Collusion and Should Never Be Trusted Again" was posted at thefederalist.com on March 27, 2019.

■ An article by David Knowles titled "Tulsi Gabbard [Democrat From Hawaii] Says It's a 'Good Thing' Trump Wasn't Charged by Mueller" was posted at yahoo.com on March 29, 2019.

■ An article by Julia Ainsley and Adam Edelman titled "Barr: Redacted Mueller Report Will Be Released by 'Mid-April, If Not Sooner' " was posted at nbcnews.com on March 29, 2019.

### **Comments about Trump opposition**

■ An article by Dominique Mosbergen titled "Pope Francis: Wall Builders Will Become Prisoners of Their Own Barriers" was posted at huffpost.com on April 1, 2019.

■ An article by Alex Madajian titled "Agencies Can't Cite Religious Belief to Bar Kids From Gay Adopers, Rules Michigan's Lesbian AG" was posted at cnsnews.com on March 29, 2019.

■ An article by Laretta Brown titled "Hollywood Celebrities Threaten to Boycott Georgia Over Bill Banning Abortion After Detection of a Fetal Heartbeat" was posted at townhall.com on March 28, 2019.

■ An article by Nick Valencia and Pamela Kirkland titled "Famous Civil Rights Group [Southern Poverty Law Center] Suffers From 'Systemic Culture of Racism and Sexism,' Staffers Say" was posted at cnn.com on March 29, 2019.

- An article by Sean Davis titled "The Only 2016 Campaign That Deliberately Colluded With Russians Was Hillary Clinton's" was posted at thefederalist.com on March 28, 2019.
- An article by Sudhir Thanawala titled "Judge [Sharon Gleason] Tosses Trump Executive Order, Restores Obama Drilling Ban" was posted at washingtontimes.com on March 31, 2019.
- An article by John Bowden titled "[Former Republican Senator Jeff] Flake: Better for a Dem to Win in 2020 Than Trump" was posted at thehill.com on March 29, 2019.
- An article by S.V. Data titled "[Republican] Bill Weld Is Taking on the Trump Monster Because Some Republican Has To" was posted at huffpost.com on March 31, 2019.
- An article by Kathryn Watson titled "Biden Accuser Lucy Flores Says She'd Still Support Biden Over Trump" was posted at cbsnews.com on April 1, 2019.
- An article by Katie Pavlich titled "Bernie Sanders: You're [Darn] Right We're Going to Destroy Private Health Insurance" was posted at townhall.com on March 29, 2019.
- An article by Sara Boboltz titled "Amy Klobuchar Outlines Support for Free 2-Year Community College" was posted at huffpost.com on March 30, 2019.
- An article by Melanie Mason titled "At Gay Rights Gala in L.A., Kamala Harris and Cory Booker Stand for Equality" was posted at latimes.com on March 31, 2019.

### **Harris and O'Rourke**

- Looking back to November, an article by Antonia Blyth titled "Jim Carrey 'Would Love' to See Kamala Harris and Beto O'Rourke Win the Presidential Race" was posted at deadline.com on Nov. 18, 2018.
- An article titled "Steve Bannon: Harris-O'Rourke Ticket Would Give Democrats the Best Shot at Beating Trump" was posted at cnbc.com on March 29, 2019.

### **Kamala Harris**

- Looking back to January, an article by Anthony Zurcher titled "Kamala Harris and the US State [of California] Looking to Take Down Trump" was posted at bbc.com on Jan. 28, 2019.
- Looking back to January, an article by Astead W. Herndon and Susan Chira titled "Can Kamala Harris Repeat Obama's Success With Black Voters?" was posted at nytimes.com on Jan. 29, 2019.
- Looking back to February, an article by Neal Rothchild and Sara Fischer titled "Kamala Harris Is the Democrats' 2020 Social Media Phenomenon" was posted at axios.com on Feb. 14, 2019.

- Looking back to February, an article by Christopher Buskirk titled "If You Miss Hillary Clinton, You're Going to Love Kamala Harris" was posted at spectator.us on Feb. 28, 2019.
- An article by Lia Eustachewich titled "Kamala Harris Now 'Completely Confused' by Jussie Smollett Case [After Several Flip-Flops]" was posted at nypost.com on March 27, 2019.
- An article titled "Network of Immigrants Push Kamala Harris' Presidential Bid" was posted at keyt.com on March 31, 2019.

### **Irishman Robert Francis (Beto) O'Rourke**

- An article by Garrett Haake and Kailani Koenig titled "Beto O'Rourke Kicks Off Three Texas Rallies With a Focus on the Border" was posted at nbcnews.com on March 30, 2019.
- An article by Will Weissert titled "Beto O'Rourke Says Immigration Makes America Safer As He Kicks off 2020 Campaign With Liberal Focus" was posted at independent.co.uk on March 31, 2019.
- An article by David Siders titled "O'Rourke Rails Against 'Unprecedented Concentration of Wealth and Power' at Kickoff Rally" was posted at politico.com on March 30, 2019.
- Looking back to October, an article by Will Weissert titled "Despite Everyman Image, Beto O'Rourke Twice As Wealthy As Ted Cruz" was posted at washingtontimes.com on Oct. 10, 2018.
- An article by Mark Finkelstein titled "Associated Press Says [Irishman] Beto Spoke in 'His Native Spanish' " was posted at newsbusters.org on March 31, 2019.

### **News about the media**

- An article titled "[Radio Host] Charlamagne the God: Obama and Trump Are to Blame for Dividing America" was posted at yahoo.com on March 30, 2019.
- An article titled "Jeanine Pirro Makes Return to Fox News Channel After Two-Week Absence" was posted at yahoo.com on March 30, 2019.

### **General interest**

- An article by Pamela McClintock titled "'Unplanned' Box Office: Controversial Anti-Abortion Pic Surprises With Strong \$6M Debut" was posted at hollywoodreporter.com on March 31, 2019.
- An article titled "Southwest Flight Cancellations to Drag Into May Due to Boeing Max 8 Grounding" was posted at usatoday.com on March 29, 2019.
- An article titled "American Airlines Flight Makes Emergency Landing [Back in Boston] Following Bird Strike After Takeoff" was posted at usatoday.com on March 31, 2019.

- An article by Chris Kissel titled "This Is the Vehicle [Toyota Sequoia] Most Likely to Last 200,000 Miles" was posted at yahoo.com on March 22, 2019.
- An article by Barnini Chakraborty titled "Chris Rock Takes Dig at Jussie Smollett at NAACP Image Awards: 'What the [Heck] Was He Thinking?' " was posted at people.com on March 31, 2019.
- A Reuters article by Bob Chiaro titled "Chicago Police Call for State's Attorney [Kim Foxx] to Resign in Smollett Controversy" was posted at reuters.com on April 1, 2019.
- Looking back to February, an article by Jade Scipioni titled "Bayer Now Faces 11,200 Lawsuits Over Roundup Risk" was posted at foxbusiness.com on Feb. 27, 2019.
- An article by Joe Rosenblatt and Tim Loh titled "Bayer Loses First Phase of Round-up Trial, Now Face Liability" was posted at bloomberg.com on March 19, 2019.



**Isaiah 55:6-11**—"Seek you the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."