



The First Man on His Feet

On Richard Henry Lee and the Seventh of June, 1776

Two hundred fifty years ago, a man missing four fingers from his left hand rose in a sweltering room in Philadelphia and spoke words that, had the Revolutionary War gone the other way, would have fitted him for a noose.

It is the seventh of June, 1776. The Pennsylvania State House. The windows are shut tight against listening ears, the summer heat be damned. Richard Henry Lee of Virginia gets to his feet.

He knows how to command a room. They called him the American Cicero, and he had earned the title, not merely been flattered with it. Years before, a fowling piece had burst in his grip and torn the fingers from his left hand, and ever after he kept the ruin wrapped in black silk. A smaller man would have hidden it. Lee made it an instrument. When he spoke, he would lift that shrouded hand and let the dark silk fall, and not an eye in the chamber failed to follow it down.

Today he lifts it. And he reads three sentences.

The first one remade the world:

Resolved, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.

That is not a question laid before a committee. That is a motion that thirteen colonies cease, that very hour, to be British.

John Adams seconded it before Lee had fully regained his chair.

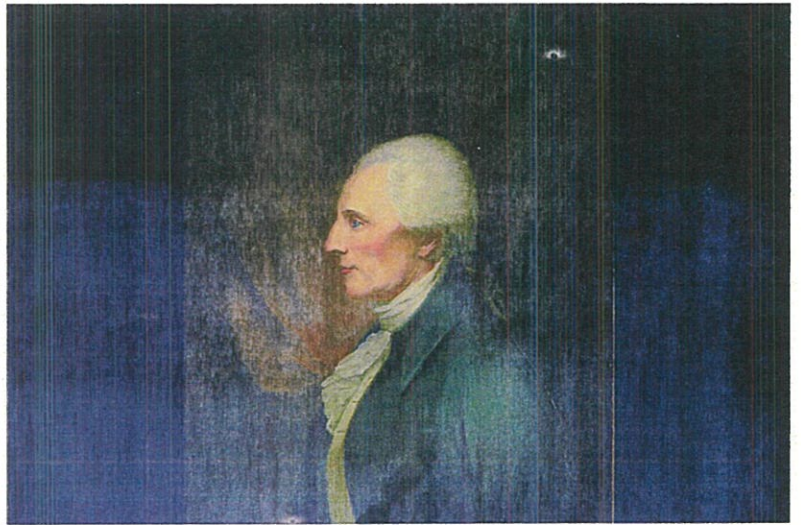
And then nothing happened.

This is the part we have quietly agreed to forget. No roar, no signing, no triumphant leap to the feet. Congress looked at what Lee had set upon the table, and Congress flinched. It voted to wait. Several delegations had no authority from home to take so enormous a step. Other men wanted foreign alliances secured and a plan of confederation settled before they leapt. And some, let us be honest about our forebears, were simply afraid. So they recessed, and the delegates rode home to put to their own people the unaskable question: Are we prepared to commit treason together?

Because treason is precisely what it was. Call it by its rightful name.

Every man who would one day say "aye" understood the arithmetic to the decimal. There was no legal independence, no nation, no army that had yet won anything that mattered. There was a king with the largest military on earth and the longest memory in Christendom. Lose the war, and the document under debate became a signed confession. The sentence for that confession was a rope. They knew it the way a man knows the weight of his own name. They debated anyway.

On the eleventh of June, Congress named a committee to draft a statement that would explain the decision, should these men ever find the nerve to make it: Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston. They handed the pen to the quiet Virginian, Thomas Jefferson. And here is the thing we have inverted entirely. That famous parchment we frame on our walls and read aloud each Fourth of July was, in the strict order of events, the footnote. It exists to justify Lee's motion. The motion came first. The deed preceded the explanation, as the deed always does.



Billy Hathorn/Wikimedia Commons

Richard Henry Lee

Now mark the detail that ought to be carved into stone somewhere public.

When the decisive vote came, on the second of July, 1776, Richard Henry Lee was not in the room.

His wife had taken ill. Virginia was framing herself a new government and wanted her ablest son at home to help build it. So the man who rose and proposed American independence swung up onto a horse and rode away before the question he had asked was ever answered. Adams stood in his place and carried the argument across the line.

He proposed it. He did not cast a vote for it. And he never seemed to spend a moment fretting over who would be remembered for it.

The resolution passed on the second of July. Adams was so certain that date would echo down the centuries that he wrote home predicting Americans would keep it forever with bonfires, parades, and illuminations. He missed by two days. We kept the fourth, the day the explanation was approved, and we let the seventh, the day a man first dared to say the thing out loud, slip silently off the calendar.

But the courage was never in the parchment. It never is.

The courage was in being first. In standing up inside a closed room, raising a maimed hand, and reading three sentences that made you a traitor the instant they left your mouth, with your name attached, in front of witnesses, before a single other Colony had pledged to stand beside you. And then trusting that strangers would summon the same nerve and finish what you had begun, even if you were not there to see it done.

That is the republican character the Founders meant for us to inherit. Not the framed document. The willingness to be the first man on his feet.

Saint Thomas More

Anne Burleigh

If you have beheld the arresting Hans Holbein portrait of Saint Thomas More in the Frick Collection in New York, you understand how this winsome saint, captured by Holbein, likewise captures your mind and heart. Deeply prayerful and imbued with iron-clad integrity, More was also charming, humorous, witty, liberally educated in Greek and Latin, law, literature, and the new humanism in English arts and culture. He was made for friendship and society, beloved by his friends, admired by his colleagues. With his powerful intellect and statesmanship, he advanced to England's highest judicial office, Lord Chancellor.

More had no intention of being a martyr. However, along with John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, he was accused of high treason and martyred by King Henry VIII for refusing to sign the Act of Succession and to take an oath declaring Henry the Supreme Head on earth of the Church in England.

More revered the law and relied on it. What does a man do, though, when the law itself is usurped by a willful ruler, when right reason is overcome by raw power?

In the face of Henry's determination to legitimize his marriage to Anne Boleyn and Henry's increasing defiance of the Church, More argued the law as far as he could, resigning as Chancellor and defending himself with lawyerly skill in his own treason trial.

Imprisoned in the Tower and fearful of dying, abandoned by all but his brilliant daughter Margaret, More held fast, refusing in conscience to accept that the Church founded by Christ could be simply a national church headed by a secular ruler, rather than the universal Church embracing all the faithful, regardless of national boundaries.

More was beheaded on July 6, 1535. His martyrdom leaves us with a sobering question: Why do some of us cave in to fear and fall into betrayal, yet a few other remarkable souls resist fear to follow the nagging voice of conscience commanding them to cleave to the truth of Christ? For More it wasn't mere bravery. It was God's grace.

(Anne Husted Burleigh is a longtime contributor to Catholic journals. She and her husband have nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. They live in Cincinnati.)

By **Andrew P. Napolitano**

June 11, 2026

A Requiem for Privacy

When President Donald Trump appointed an obviously unqualified friend, a home builder executive, to be acting director of national intelligence, he inadvertently triggered attention to Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The director of national intelligence is the head of the umbrella agency that gathers intelligence from the 17 federal spying agencies and from that data prepares and delivers the president's daily briefing. Sec. 702, which permits warrantless spying, expires this month.

Trump prefers to receive his briefings directly from the CIA and its foreign colleagues, leaving the DNI as an appendage with little to do. Nevertheless, the DNI employs hundreds of spies and analysts, and most of them have national security clearances that permit them to view the nation's most closely guarded secrets and to invade anyone's privacy.

Section 702 of FISA theoretically permits federal agents to spy without warrants or suspicion on foreign persons. In reality, it is used as a fig leaf to spy on Americans.

A few years ago, Department of Justice lawyers persuaded the FISA court secretly to permit the National Security Agency — America's domestic spies — to spy on Americans with whom foreign persons communicate; even suspicionless Americans whose communications with foreigners are benign; even Americans removed by six degrees from conversations with foreigners.

Before 9/11, no one in law enforcement was permitted access to data obtained outside the restraints imposed by the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution. Those restraints prohibit searches and seizures — in the modern parlance, surveillance and data acquisition — without a search warrant issued by a judge based on probable cause of crime, sworn to under oath. And the warrant itself must specifically describe the places to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.

Since 9/11, the wall between surveillance and law enforcement has collapsed even though the feds still maintain that the Fourth Amendment only regulates law enforcement and not surveillance. This wild proposition is defied by the plain language of the amendment, which protects all persons from all government, and by the history of the colonists dealing with British government agents executing general warrants issued by a secret court in London.

Those warrants permitted the bearers to arrest whomever they wished, to search wherever they chose and to seize whatever they found. Under the pretext of looking for evidence of crimes, like failing to comply with the Stamp Act, these agents were truly looking for what the king considered subversive, like a draft of the Declaration of Independence.

James Madison and his colleagues who drafted the Fourth Amendment surely knew that history and shared the near universal colonial revulsion at general warrants. Hence the requirements in the amendment for probable cause of crime sworn to before the warrant-issuing judge, and specificity in the warrant itself.

All of this was crafted to outlaw general warrants, and protect all persons in America from warrantless government assaults and invasions of their “persons, houses, papers, and effects.”

Now, back to FISA. FISA was crafted in reaction to President Richard Nixon’s use of the CIA and FBI for warrantless domestic surveillance purposes. This was spying on Americans — opponents of the Vietnam War and Nixon’s political opponents — which as we all now know came crashing down on Nixon in the Watergate scandal.

FISA itself is deeply flawed. Rather than simply criminalizing all warrantless surveillance, it lowered the standard for authorizing surveillance and data acquisition, i.e., searches and seizures, from probable cause of crime — Madison’s gold standard for protecting privacy — to probable cause of communicating with a foreign person, a standard that by its nature implicates innocent Americans, unnamed in FISA warrants.

One infamous FISA warrant authorized the feds to seize the telephone records of all Verizon customers, some 115 million at the time.

But there is another side to this fig leaf. According to former NSA agents, FISA itself is a charade, as the domestic spies and their international cousins — that’s the NSA and the CIA — have a manifest indifference to constitutional norms. Stated differently, they don’t care about the Fourth Amendment or probable cause. They spy on whomever they wish whenever they choose and seize whatever data they can.

If these former NSA agents are correct — I have known them for many years and I believe them — we have come full circle from the general warrant days; all under the guise of FISA. FISA is pernicious not only because of its unconstitutional lowering of the standard for judicially issued searches and seizures, it is pernicious because the NSA and the CIA — the latter prohibited by federal law from spying in the U.S. and from engaging in law enforcement — pretend to be complying with FISA court orders, all the while spying on whomever they choose; and lying about it.

Section 702 is a symbol, but it is not substantive.

Stated differently, the spies will spy on us with or without 702 until we have a president who stops them; and survives. The battle over 702 is symbolic of authoritarians versus constitutionalists, but its demise will just drive the spies deeper into the deep state. 702 has come to stand for the

power and fear the intelligence community wields over the executive branch that employs it and the Congress that funds and approves it.

On the eve of America's 250th anniversary, we are asked to accept and pay for a government that knows more about us than we do about it. One whose rapacious and insatiable appetite for knowing our thoughts, impressions, feelings and emotions far exceeds anything the British agents sought from the colonists who fought a bloody revolution over this.

The values that underlie the Fourth Amendment — the sovereignty of the individual, the right to be left alone, the promise of limited government — have been rejected by the folks we hired to protect them. But they are human values. And they will not rest.

GREAT CONVERSION STORIES

Louise Sighouin

John Janaro

In this series, we have already heard something of the mid-19th century missionary journeys of Father Pierre-Jean de Smet and his Jesuit confreres, who came from Belgium and France to Missouri beginning in 1823. At that time, Missouri was the frontier of the rapidly expanding United States of America. Lands to the north and west were still classified as "unorganized territory" in 1821 when Missouri joined the Union as the 24th state. These lands, in fact, were populated by numerous Native American tribes. The Jesuits soon established a mission at Council Bluffs (present-day Iowa) in 1839 and worked among the indigenous peoples of the area.

The natives of midwestern and northwestern North America at this time had had very little direct contact with the Europeans, but their ways of life had already been affected by devastating epidemics of smallpox and other new diseases from Europe for which they lacked all immunity. Faced with these harsh and inexplicable afflictions, the reduced native communities nevertheless preserved their ancestral traditions and their profound sense of connection with the land on which they lived, and which gave them sustenance.

Meanwhile, Iroquois visitors from New York told them about the teaching of the "blackrobes," who promised a new and more profound relationship with the Great Spirit, and a new strength for salvation and peace amid their sufferings. For many, poverty and sorrow had already opened their hearts to desire and receive the Gospel. The Salish people of Wyoming and Montana had requested that the blackrobes come to instruct them, and this led to the first series of long, difficult journeys by De Smet and the Jesuits to the northwest, where

they established new missions that were gratefully received. Entire tribes became catechumens, but the Jesuits were few in number and still learning the native languages slowly and with no small difficulty.

In his voluminous journals, De Smet wrote about his amazement at the peoples' heartfelt fervor for the Catholic faith, while lamenting the difficulty of catechizing them in their own languages and within their own cultural milieu. But the Holy Spirit supplied in beautiful ways what was needed to overcome these difficulties. In various circumstances, God gave extraordinary graces of holiness, understanding of the Gospel, and evangelizing zeal to particular indigenous converts. In 1865, De Smet wrote about one of the most remarkable of the new Christians—a young woman from the Coeur d'Alene (Skitswish) people of northern Idaho, Louise Sighouin.

Sighouin, the daughter of a chief, was held in great esteem by her people not only because of her rank, but above all because of her generosity, wisdom, and kindness. Before she heard the Gospel, she seemed already to be living by the grace of some kind of presentiment of the mercy of Jesus Christ. In De Smet's own analogy, Sighouin was like the *woman searching for her lost treasure* (Lk 15:8-10), rejoicing when she found the truth her heart had been seeking. De Smet baptized her in the waters of Lake Coeur d'Alene in April of 1842. Taking the Christian name Louise, her already exemplary and generous life was quickly transformed into a luminous witness of faith and charity. She worked diligently to learn the faith and soon became a catechist who was a great help to the Jesuit mission. She spent herself in prayer, caring for the sick, teaching and encouraging others, admonishing against sin, and becoming a bold and saintly evangelizer of the Coeur d'Alene people until her death in 1853. And Jesus in his Catholic Church has remained a living presence among them to the present day.

(John Janaro is associate professor emeritus of theology at Christendom College and author of Never Give Up: My Life and God's Mercy (Servant Books). He blogs at www.johnjanaro.com.)

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The most urgent necessity is, not that the State should teach, but that it should allow education. All monopolies are detestable, but the worst of all is the monopoly of education." – Frédéric Bastiat

No, The Just-War Tradition Is Not ‘Outdated’

By PHIL LAWLER

Although I generally admired Pope Leo’s first encyclical, I was dismayed to read, in paragraph 192:

“Today, more than ever, without prejudice to the right to self-defense in the strictest sense, it is important to reaffirm that the ‘just war’ theory, which has all too often been used to justify any kind of war, is now outdated.”

Pope Leo is not the first pontiff to say that just-war theory is outdated. Pope Francis said the same thing. Even Pope Pius XII, who cannot be classified as a pacifist, said in his Christmas message of 1948: “The theory of war as an apt and proportionate means of solving international conflicts is now out of date.”

But Pope Pius, speaking in the aftermath of World War II, did not jettison just-war theory — even with the advent of The Bomb threatening new levels of mass destruction. No one short of Dr. Strangelove would think that nuclear war is “an apt and proportionate means” of resolving conflicts. A just war is always a last resort, when preferable methods have failed.

Pope Leo renders his judgment “without prejudice to the right to self-defense.” But in the just-war tradition, a war can be considered just *only* if it is fought in self-defense, or in the defense of others.

If a nation can be morally justified in defending itself, how shall we distinguish between which sort of military actions are justified, and which are not? That is precisely the purpose of just-war theory: to make such distinctions. And indeed Pope Leo uses the principles of just-war reasoning when he discusses the dangers of autonomous weapons.

Later in the encyclical, the pope again speaks inaccurately when he says: “When a culture normalizes and justifies conflict, a dangerous pathway opens up. . . .” Conflict is a reality of human interactions, a consequence of original sin, which no moral system is likely to eliminate. Nations, like individuals, have different wants and needs; sometimes they will be in conflict. The key question, in international affairs, is how those conflicts will be resolved, and of course peaceful negotiations are the preferred method.

Clausewitz famously characterized war as “the continuation of diplomacy with other means.” Pope Leo is certainly right to prefer means of resolving diplomatic conflicts short of war. But again, if all other means fail, and if the consequences of an unjust peace are even more serious than the horrors of war, the Church has traditionally taught that military action can be warranted — and in some cases might be required. Surely the Holy Father, as a loyal son of St. Augustine, must understand that great saint’s argument that the only purpose of a just war is to secure a just peace.

Now if Pope Leo had suggested that just-war theory needs to be *updated*, I could wholeheartedly agree. In *Magnifica Humanitas* he outlines some of the reasons why the just-war tradition must be brought into line with 21st-century realities.

In discussing the danger of autonomous weapons — military systems guided by arti-

ficial intelligence, without immediate human oversight — the pontiff invokes the principles of just-war reasoning when he says that “moral judgment cannot be reduced to calculation, for it involves conscience, personal responsibility, and the recognition of the other as a person.”

He goes on, in the next paragraph (n. 199), to give a more extended example of just-war analysis:

“It is not enough to invoke a generic type of ethics. Concrete criteria for discernment must be established.

“The first such criterion concerns personal responsibility. When a decision to strike becomes automated or opaque, the risk of abdicating responsibility increases. For this reason, the chain of responsibility must be identifiable and verifiable; those who design, train, authorize, and employ technology must be held accountable for their decisions.

“The second criterion pertains to the moral time frame for making judgments. While AI tends to expedite the decision-making processes, speed and efficiency should never be the supreme motivating force for the irreversible decisions made in the context of war.

“The third criterion is the identification and protection of civilians. Any technology that facilitates attacks without seeing the face of human beings lowers the moral threshold of conflict. Target selection and the use of force must not confuse combatants and noncombatants, nor ignore the impact on defenseless populations.”

Earlier in the encyclical the pope mentioned other, nonmilitary forms of aggression that might be used, in the manner that Clausewitz envisioned, to force a diplomatic adversary into submission: “Alongside conventional warfare, there are hybrid forms such as cyberattacks, information manipulation, campaigns of influence, and the automation of strategic decisions.”

To give just one example, the use of an EMP (electromagnetic-pulse) weapon, crippling the energy grid, could cause more devastation and ultimately more deaths than a bombing campaign. Closer to the theme of the papal encyclical, disinformation campaigns — made far more powerful by AI capabilities — can wreak havoc on the democratic process. These are forms of aggression, tantamount to warfare. A cyberattack of sufficient scale might even be considered a classic example of a *casus belli*.

These developments, which the pope mentions in his encyclical, deserve more attention from just-war moralists. One might add the need for a deeper discussion of preemptive war, in an age when hesitation could mean national destruction. And the increasingly prominent role played by non-state actors — such as terrorist groups, often acting with barely concealed support from governments — merits more moral discernment as well.

How can a nation, acting justly, respond to these new dangers? The challenge for Christian moralists today is to update, not jettison, the just-war tradition.

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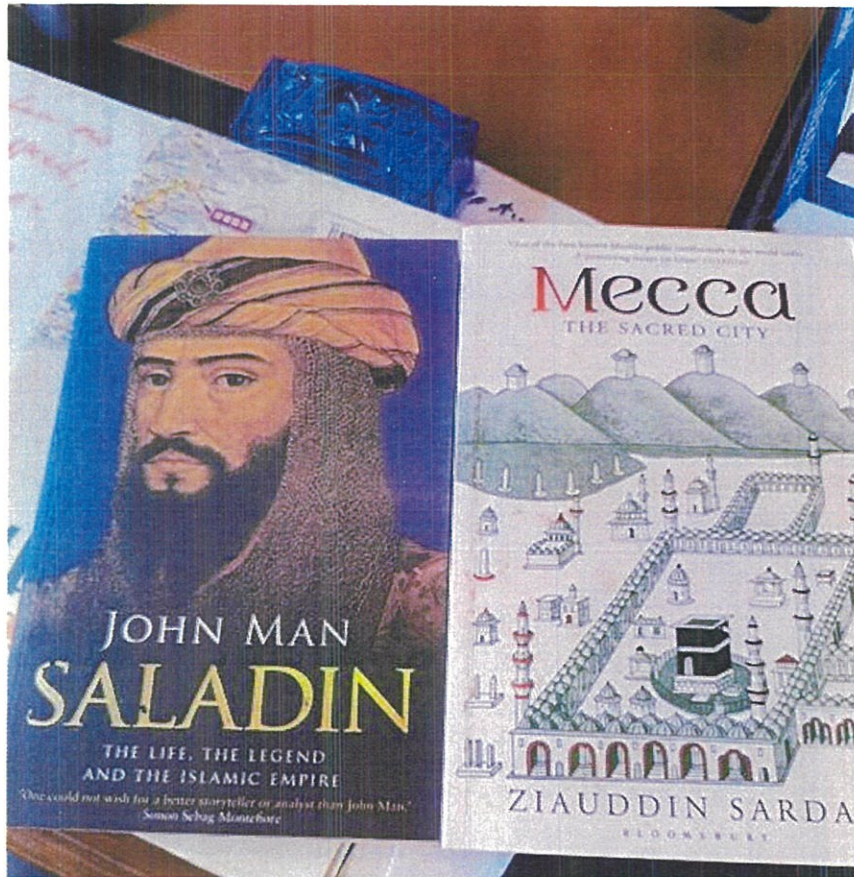
The King Who Lost His Throne for A Vassal

Is Trump the modern King Guy?

HUA BIN • JUNE 11, 2026 • 1,600 WORDS • 17 COMMENTS

The Unz Review • An Alternative Media Selection

A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the American Mainstream Media



History works in funny ways. Sometimes, you get the feeling that you are watching a story 800-year-old unfolding in front of you – the cast is different, but the plot is the same.

As the Iran war gyrates between truce and fight over the last few weeks, I read up the story of Saladin, the great Islamic king who united the Arabs and saved Islam from Christian crusaders in the twelfth century.

The short 270-page John Man book titled **Saladin** is a fascinating read. The story of **Raynald of Châtillon** and King Guy in Chapter 8 reads like a perfect replica of the story of Netanyahu and President Trump.

Over the last 2 months, Trump has been caught between the US national interest to end the war it has already lost and the Israeli interest to continue the fight.

Whenever there seems a chance of a settlement, Israel would launch an attack, often in Lebanon, to scuttle it.

Despite his 38 documented announcements that “a deal is close”, Trump is repeatedly drawn back by his vassal, or his *master* as many would argue, to the battlefield.

Judging by the news headlines as of today (June 11), the war is back on for good.

Here lies the parallel between Netanyahu/Trump and Raynald/King Guy.

Raynald of Châtillon (c. 1124 – July 4, 1187) was a French knight who became one of the most infamous leaders of the Crusades.

Raynald was born to a noble family in France. He travelled east during the Second Crusade in 1147 and stayed on as a mercenary soldier.

He grew rich and powerful by marrying Princess Constance of Antioch in 1153, which made him the ruler of the massive northern Crusader state.

Always low on money because of gambling and prostitution, Raynald allied with an Armenian ruler and launched a brutal three-week plunder of the Christian Byzantine island of Cyprus in 1156.

He forced the islanders to pay huge ransoms and took wealthy hostages. From that “success”, Raynald developed a taste for piracy and looted Christians and Muslims alike.

In 1160, Muslim forces captured him during a raid. He was locked away in a prison in Aleppo for 17 years until he was finally ransomed in 1176.

Once freed, Raynald married again and became the Lord of Oultrejordain (Transjordan). His art of seduction was matched only by his thirst for money.

He took control of fortresses near the Dead Sea. These castles sat directly on the vital trade and pilgrim paths between Egypt and Syria.

In 1180, King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem negotiated a two-year truce with Saladin to secure peace and trade.

During the Crusades, these truces were formal treaties that halted fighting, guaranteed safe passage for trade caravans, and protected pilgrims traveling to holy sites.

Raynald broke it in 1181 and 1182 by attacking Muslim caravans. His most egregious breach happened in 1183, when he launched warships into the Red Sea.

These ships raided peaceful trading ports and explicitly targeted pilgrims traveling to Mecca, violating the core spirit of the peace treaty.

Saladin organized his army and fought with Raynald and the crusader armies.

Following years of conflict, a new four-year peace treaty was signed in 1185 between Saladin and Raymond III of Tripoli, who was acting as regent for the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Raynald broke this treaty again in late 1186 by attacking a massive, wealthy Muslim caravan traveling from Egypt to Syria. He captured all the merchants, stole their goods, and threw them in his dungeons.

When the reigning King of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan, ordered Raynald to return the stolen property and follow the peace treaty, Raynald refused.

He claimed that as the independent Lord of Oultrejordain, he was the master of his own land. He argued that the treaty was signed by the King of Jerusalem, and therefore, it was not binding on his personal territory.

This flagrant breach of the treaty gave Saladin the *casus belli* needed to declare a holy war. Again, King Guy came to Raynald’s defense in the name of their shared identity.

On July 4, 1187, the Crusader army was completely surrounded and destroyed at the Battle of Hattin. Both King Guy and Raynald of Châtillon were captured alive and brought to Saladin’s tent.

Saladin offered a cup of ice water to King Guy as a traditional gesture of mercy. When King Guy passed the cup to a thirsty Raynald, Saladin stopped him, stating he had not offered the water to Raynald and would not spare his life.

Saladin denounced Raynald of Châtillon for his constant oath-breaking and personally beheaded him on the spot.

Because the Christian army was destroyed at this battle, the city of Jerusalem lost its primary defenders. Just a few months later, Saladin marched on the holy city and captured it, ending 88 years of Christian rule.

Historians today describe Raynald of Châtillon as a deeply aggressive, power-hungry crusader driven by religious hatred and greed.

Raynald was a religious extremist who saw the conflict as a total, holy war. He had zero interest in living peacefully with Muslims.

He routinely insulted Islam, attacked Muslim pilgrims going to Mecca, and even built a fleet of ships to sail down the Red Sea in an attempt to attack and destroy the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Raynald believed that peace treaties were a trap. He wanted to launch a pre-emptive strike to disrupt Saladin's supply lines and split his empire apart.

Raynald was a pirate in his heart. He ruled from the massive desert castle of Karak, located in modern-day Jordan, which sat directly next to the wealthy trade routes connecting Egypt and Syria.

He was always in debt and desperately needed money. When peace was declared, he was banned from robbing the rich Muslim merchants and travellers passing by his castle.

Raynald hated the peace because it ruined his primary source of income: raiding caravans and taking prisoners for ransom.

Raynald did not respect anyone's authority, not even the Christian King of Jerusalem.

When King Guy ordered him to stop attacking Muslims and respect the truce, Raynald proudly declared that he was the master of his own lands and that the King's treaty did not apply to him.

He preferred the freedom of war over the restrictions of a peace treaty.

Raynald didn't just attack Muslims. Earlier in his career, he launched a brutal pirate raid against the Christian island of Cyprus.

He beat up local priests, robbed monasteries, and destroyed the island.

Because he was willing to hurt other Christians for money, many crusaders viewed him as a greedy criminal rather than a holy warrior.

Raynald was a deeply divisive figure, and most of his fellow Christian leaders absolutely detested him.

Famous Christian historians from that time, like William of Tyre, wrote that Raynald was a brutal, arrogant thug who cared only about himself.

Even though Saladin kept King Guy alive, his life after the Battle of Hattin was filled with loss, embarrassment, and a desperate struggle to regain his power.

Saladin kept King Guy as a prisoner of war for about a year. In 1188, Saladin finally let Guy go on one major condition: Guy had to promise to cross the sea and leave the Middle East forever.

King Guy immediately broke his promise. He took an oath from a priest that said his promise to a Muslim leader did not count.

Guy marched straight to the city of Tyre, which was the only major Christian stronghold left. However, the Christian nobles there locked the gates and refused to let him in! They called him a failed leader who lost Jerusalem.

Desperate to prove himself, Guy gathered a tiny force and attacked the Muslim-held city of Acre. This daring move kicked off a massive two-year battle that set the stage for the arrival of European armies.

In the end, he lost his throne but was given control of the island of Cyprus, where he ruled until he died.

I could stop telling the story here but what happened next is interesting and contrasts starkly with the lack of honor during warfare by today's superpower and its lackey.

The news that Jerusalem had fallen shocked all of Europe. According to legend, the Pope died of a heart attack when he heard the terrible news.

The new Pope immediately ordered a brand-new holy war, which became known as the Third Crusade.

The three most powerful kings in Europe answered the call: the King of France, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the legendary King Richard I of England (also known as Richard the Lionheart).

King Richard arrived in the Holy Land in 1191. He was a brilliant military leader and a ferocious fighter. He quickly took over the Christian war effort, captured the city of Acre, and won a massive victory against Saladin at the Battle of Arsuf.

Despite their rivalry, Richard and Saladin developed a deep, respectful relationship. When Richard fell sick with a fever, Saladin sent him fresh fruit and ice from the mountains to help him heal.

When Richard's horse was killed in battle, Saladin sent him two new horses because he believed such a great warrior should not fight on foot.

Today, Trump and Netanyahu had no puncture to assassinate an 86-year opponent under the false pretence of negotiations. They even boasted about it. There is zero respect for treaties or their enemies.

Well, I guess the passage of 800 years is not quite enough to civilize some barbarians.

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HOLY PLACES

Shall These Bones Live?

Anthony Esolen

TWO MEN ARE TOURING A SMALL ISLAND off the western coast of Scotland. The younger is a Scotsman himself, proud of his nation and eager to show his elder friend some of her wild natural beauty and the glories of her past. The elder is stout, strong of mind, but hobbling. To say they're on a "tour" may give a false impression. The monastery and its buildings that once made this island a center of learning and evangelism are in ruins.

There was once a marble altar in the church, wrote the elder, but it was destroyed over the centuries by the superstition of the islanders, who believed that "a fragment of this stone was a defense against shipwreck, fire, and miscarriages." The islanders have taken to using the old convent's chapel as a "kind of general cow-house, and the bottom is consequently too miry for examination." It was said that Scottish kings were interred there. The old man was dubious about that, but he did say that perhaps chieftains were there, or Irish princes. "The graves are very numerous," he wrote, with a touch of sad irony, "and some of them undoubtedly contain the remains of men who did not expect so soon to be forgotten." The monastery had been the brightest light of learning in the north of Europe, but the island now "has no school for education, no temple for worship, only two inhabitants that can speak English, and not one that can write or read."

Yet the old man did not scorn this nearly abandoned place. His name was Samuel Johnson, the greatest English man of letters in his time, and the island was Iona, once the site of Saint Columba's monastery, whence would spread, to all England and to pagans in many a land beyond, the light of the Christian faith. Such a place ought to elevate the soul with its solemnity. "That man is little to be envied," he wrote, "whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona!" Nor did he believe that history had shut its book forever upon that island. Marathon is now a town in Greece with a nice tourist trade, and Iona has been repaired and made amenable by the Scottish government, but we Christians look for more. "Perhaps," wrote Johnson, "in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be sometime again the instructress of the Western Regions."

Son of man, said the Lord to Ezekiel, shall these bones live?

■ A LOWLY PLACE ■

Saint Columba came to Scotland in 563, and by his preaching and his holy life he converted the Picts to the faith, in return for which the king gave him this island of Iona, about three square miles, where he built his monastery as a seedbed of learning and piety. Iona was governed by an abbot, and Bede the Venerable says that the bishops roundabout submitted to him as to their chief, even though he himself was not a bishop. Iona is called, in Scots Gaelic, *I Chaluim Chille*, or Iona of Saint Columba.

Columba died in 597, after a life of much preaching and study and, according to his biographer Saint Adamnan, many miracles, one of which I'll relate here. When the day of his death was approaching, though the old man seemed hearty and hale, he had stopped to rest at a large stone cross that was fixed in the ground. The cross is still there. Then came a horse-drawn cart loaded with milk for the monks, and when the horse approached Columba, it laid its head in his lap and began to shed tears. The monk driving the cart tried to pull the horse away, but Columba stopped him. "See here," he said, "you're a man, with a rational soul, but you could know nothing of my departure except from what

I told you recently. But this brute and irrational beast, as his Creator willed it, has revealed that his master is shortly to part from it." And Columba blessed the poor horse.

Then he got up and climbed the hill overlooking the monastery, and raised his hands in blessing. "To this place, as narrow and lowly as it is," said Columba, "not only Scottish kings, but even the rulers of barbarous and foreign peoples will come with their subjects to honor it, and holy men from other churches will lend it no small veneration." What a fine thing it would be if God should will it that such people will again come to Iona, not as tourists but as pilgrims, or as those who have lost their way but seek to find it again.

■ KINGS BOW DOWN IN HUMILITY ■

Iona helped to make England both a nation and Christian.

The Germanic peoples from beyond the pale, they who came like a deluge on the south to overwhelm the western Roman empire in the 5th and 6th centuries, were either Arian Christians, like the Goths, or pagans, bold, intelligent, and uncivilized. The Goths were dominant in the Mediterranean world. It was the pagan Saxons who first took Roman Britain by storm. By that time the British were all Christian. They were pushed into the mountains of Wales (indeed, the Welsh word for Englishman is *Saesneg*: Saxon). Thence came the legends of a Welsh Christian king, Arthur, who for a time cleansed the kingdom of Logres (the Welsh for England is *Lloegr*). The Irish, meanwhile, had been evangelized by the Roman-British Saint Patrick, and it was from Ireland that Saint Columba had come to Iona.

In 635, the Northumbrian king Oswald, who had been baptized in Scotland when he and his forces were banished by his cruel and murderous brother, sent to the Scots to ask for some holy man to come and instruct them further in the faith. Of course, the Scots looked to Iona. The first monk who came, says Bede, was an austere fellow who made no headway at all with them. When he returned to Iona, he said that the people were "impossible to tame, hard-headed and barbarous." But Saint Aidan, who heard him, said, "It seems to me, brother, that you were harsher to that uneducated audience than was just, and you did not follow the apostolic example, to offer first the milk of easy teachings, so that they would be nourished little by little by the word of God, and be brought round to receiving the more perfect." So the monks sent Aidan himself to Oswald, and the two men became most dear friends.

We know Oswald too as a saint. Adamnan says that on the night before his battle against a coalition between the pagan Penda and the British chieftain Cadwallon, Saint Columba appeared to him in a dream, arrayed in angelic light, shadowing the camp with his robe. "Be strong," he said to Oswald, "and play the man, for I shall be with you." When Oswald told his men about the dream, they all agreed to become Christian, and the battle went their way. Oswald was victorious, and for eight years governed all of Northumbria in a united kingdom. And though he later died on the battlefield, many miracles were attributed to his relics, and the evangelization of England continued.

■ THE BOOK OF THE DOVE ■

Does it seem odd that kings might submit to saints, and become saints themselves? No odder, I suppose, than that the learned and the saintly might be artists, uniting in themselves the good, the true, and the beautiful. Saint Columba—his baptismal Latin name means "dove," and Bede notes that so does the name Iona (Jonah) in Hebrew—is thought to have produced about three hundred manuscripts. Such were typically *illuminated*, and the most renowned of all is the Book of Kells, a fantastically ornate book of the four Gospels, in Latin. It is also called Saint Columba's Book, but it was likely begun long after he died. Most historians say that it

did originate in Iona, and was completed there or at Kells, an Irish monastery—for Iona was the motherhouse of many houses in Scotland, England, and Ireland too.

The book is on display at Trinity College in Dublin, and I've seen someone say that it's less important for what's in it than for the artistry. Modern obtuseness, that. The men who adorned the Book of Kells were inspired by what was in it: the Gospels. If you go to the famous "Chi-Rho-Iota" page, you will see why. It illuminates the initial letters of the second chapter of Matthew: *Christi autem generatio*: thus the initial letters of Christ's name. Gold is the dominant color. A whole universe seems to lie hidden in the illumination's intricate curls: interlaced knots, wheels within wheels,

an angelic face, an otter catching a fish, two mice nibbling on each side of a Eucharistic wafer, a butterfly emerging from the chrysalis.

Is it unfair to say that the Church no longer produces or commissions such artistic wonder now? I don't know, but this I do know: a nation exhausted of its faith is artistically barren. Maybe we should find another Iona, forgotten or ignored, to bring to life the dead bones in the field. And let the doves return.

Anthony Esolen is translator of Augustine's Confessions (TAN), translator and editor of Dante's Divine Comedy (Random House), and author of four volumes of essays, How the Church Has Changed the World (MAGNIFICAT).

Pentagon: Israel Ramps Up Spying on Top US Officials

The espionage is directed at obtaining information on how the White House plans to move forward with the Iran War

by Kyle Anzalone | June 7, 2026 at 10:58 am ET

The Department of War has raised the counterintelligence threat posed by Israel to its top level. The sources said that Tel Aviv wanted intelligence on Washington's plans for the war against Iran.

The New York Times and NBC News report speaking with multiple sources who said that the Defense Intelligence Agency raised the threat posed by Israel to the "critical level." The Times reports that the targets of Israeli intelligence include President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff.

Witkoff, along with Trump's son-in-law, is leading the negotiations with Iran. Officials told the Times that Tel Aviv is seeking insight into Trump's decision-making on the war against Iran.

Israel has attempted to undermine negotiations with Iran to prolong the conflict. After the US and Iran agreed to a ceasefire in April that was intended to extend to Lebanon, Israel ramped up its war against its northern neighbor. Israel's attacks on Lebanon resulted in Iran refusing to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Israel is also attempting to surveil the Department of War's policy chief, Elbridge A. Colby, and his top aide, Michael P. DiMino.

The White House said the reporting on the counterintelligence threat from Israel was false. "This entire story is false and sourced to someone who doesn't have any knowledge of what's going on," the statement said. Israel also claimed the reporting is "completely false."

The Israeli statement added, "Israel does not gather intelligence on American entities, let alone US government officials." In an episode of This Last Weekend with Theo Vaughn, former CIA counterintelligence officer John Kiriakou said that Israel has always spied on the US.

Current and former US intelligence officials told NBC News that while it is common for allies to spy on each other, the current espionage by Israel is well beyond what is expected.

The report comes as Congress is considering the 2027 National Defense Authorization Act, which includes a provision that will further integrate Israel into the US military-industrial base.

Pope Leo breaks new ground with encyclical on AI

[News/Analysis]

May 25, 2026

In choosing to be known as Pope Leo XIV, our current Pontiff made tribute to Leo XIII, the author of *Rerum Novarum*, the encyclical that formed the foundation of Catholic social teaching. Now Leo XIV stands alongside his illustrious predecessor, as the author of his own landmark encyclical, breaking new ground in that field.

Like Leo XIII, who applied Catholic moral teachings to the social problems arising from the Industrial Revolution, Leo XVI sees the world facing an era of disruptive social change, brought on by the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI): a development that will again bring profound changes in the way we live. Again like Leo XIII he foresees that these changes will create new temptations toward greed and exploitation, toward abuses of power and inequality, toward alienation and disregard for human dignity.

However Pope Leo XIV also has some advantages over his predecessor. He can (and does) build on the foundation of Catholic social teaching that began with *Rerum Novarum*. And as Francis Rocca observed in *The Atlantic*, the earlier Pope “didn’t publish an encyclical about the Industrial Revolution until more than a century after it started.” In sharp contrast Pope Leo’s encyclical appears at a time when most people are only beginning to think through the implications of AI. His teaching is nicely timed to influence discussions before firm opinions are formed and opposing viewpoints hardened.

“Humanity, created by God in all its grandeur, is today facing a pivotal choice,” writes the Holy Father: “either to construct a new Tower of Babel or to build the city in which God and humanity dwell together.” That opening sentence encapsulates the challenge of the encyclical.

The limits of humanity

“The primary choice is not between a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to technology, but rather between constructing Babel or rebuilding Jerusalem,” writes the Pontiff. He explains that the enormous potential of AI can be used either to imitate the arrogant builders of the Tower of Babel—“a project conceived without reference to God, supported by a uniformity that eliminated diversity and that chose homogenization over communion”—or to imitate the prophet Nehemiah and rebuild the community.

Nehemiah, the Pope reminds us, conceived his project “at a time of great vulnerability in the history of ancient Israel,” as the Hebrew people prepared to return from captivity in Babylon to their shattered homes. He inspired the people to work together, beginning with prayer, fasting, and discernment, “building relationships before rebuilding with stones.”

Today, in a world already unsettled by the forward rush of the digital revolution, the introduction of AI “threatens to normalize an anti-human vision,” the Pope warns. While acknowledging that AI offers exciting prospects for material progress, he insists that machines cannot replace humans as the ultimate decision-makers. “Moral judgment cannot be reduced to calculation, for it involves conscience, personal responsibility, and the recognition of the other as a person.”

Pope Leo is happy to welcome the use of AI to perform routine and menial functions, freeing people for more creative and satisfying work. He recognizes that computers can calculate faster than robots can eliminate user errors. But he notes that “building for the common good means accepting the limits and weakness of humanity without consider them an error to be corrected.”

In short the Pope demands that AI be developed with an eye to the demands of the common good, and used in ways that protect people—especially vulnerable people—from exploitation. The encyclical calls for a broader consultation on how this new technological frontier should be opened, and how it might be regulated. That cautious approach will not be welcomed by the AI developers who are now barreling headlong toward implementation of their projects. Still the Pontiff is steadfast: “Calling for prudence, rigorous evaluation, and even, at times, a slower pace in adopting AI does not mean opposing progress; instead, it is an exercise of responsible care for the human family.”

The Church's social teaching

Although the focus of *Magnifica Humanitas* is unquestionably on AI, the encyclical also provides a solid review and explanation of the tradition of Catholic social teaching. Nearly half of the document is dedicated to the history of papal teachings on social issues in the 135 years since *Rerum Novarum*. Pope Leo XIV observes that two central insights of *Rerum Novarum* are equally applicable to the discussion of AI: “the primacy of human labor over any mindset focused solely on finance or productivity—with the consequent attention to the people and families most susceptible to exploitation—and the inseparable link between proclaiming the Gospel and pursuing a more just social order.”

Developing the latter point, the Pope explains some of the fundamental principles of Church social teaching, including the *common good*, which “cannot be reduced to a mere list of conditions or institutions;” the *right to private property*, which entails a duty to use property for that common good; and *subsidiarity*, “according to which the role of individuals, families, local communities and intermediary organizations should not be supplanted by higher-level authorities.”

Applying these principles to the questions posed by AI, the Pope sums up the moral challenges to be addressed:

The principles of Social Doctrine offer a framework for understanding this new reality. In a world where data, computational resources and regulatory influence remain in the hands of a few, to speak of the common good means exposing this new form of epistemic, economic and political asymmetry and naming the new monopolies of AI. To speak of the universal destination of goods means finding ways of ensuring universal access to both technologies and the education needed to use them. To speak of subsidiarity calls for protecting the ability of communities to make choices and corrections, rather than confining their role to mere oversight after the standards have been set elsewhere. To speak of solidarity obliges us to recognize the hidden, often exploited workers, who sustain algorithmic systems. To speak of justice requires questioning the global distribution of power that decides who in fact can train these models and who is merely subjected to them. Likewise, it means acknowledging that social justice is not only a goal to be safeguarded after technologies are deployed, but a condition that must shape their very design from the outset.

Specific problems with AI

Is it realistic to expect that the developers of AI—some of them already anticipating spectacular profits for their creations—will pause to reflect on these moral guidelines? The Vatican offered one hopeful sign at the press conference introducing the encyclical: the participation of Christopher Olah, the co-founder of Anthropic, one of the leading ventures in the field. Olah expressed his own hope for “a long collaboration between those of us who are building this and those who can see what we, from the inside, cannot.”

Still Pope Leo concedes in *Magnifica Humanitas* that regulating the AI field will not be easy. He writes:

In many cases within the digital context, control over platforms, infrastructure, data and computing power does not rest with States, but with major economic and technological actors. These entities effectively set the conditions for access, determine the rules of visibility and shape the very possibilities for participation. When such power is concentrated in the hands of a few, it tends to become opaque and evade public oversight, increasing the risk of distorted forms of development that give rise to new dependencies, exclusions, manipulations and inequalities.

To complicate matters immeasurably, some of the most influential figures in the AI world are enthusiastic proponents of “transhumanism” or “post-humanism.” Without naming names, the Pope gives a pointed critique of these ideologies, which see “a futuristic vision of an ‘enhanced human being’ or a ‘human-machine hybrid.’” Such visions can never be reconciled with Christianity—although the Pontiff remarks that the faith *does* provide a path to becoming “more than human”:

For centuries, the Christian tradition has maintained that human beings are not confined by the boundaries of their own nature; rather, they are called to self-transcendence, not through an escape from reality or a contempt for their limitations, but through their fulfillment in love.

Even apart from the dangers of degrading ideologies, reliance on AI will have its dangers, the Pope reminds us. The internet has already displayed a frightening power to spread disinformation, suppressing independent thought and undermining democracy. Improper reliance of AI in education will stunt the intellectual development of the young, and obsession with the digital world degrades normal human relationships.

Meanwhile the ever-greater demand for computing power can aggravate environmental problems; the use of robots can lengthen the unemployment lines; while in impoverished countries others workers, underpaid and often in danger, sweat to provide the raw materials that sustain the AI machines.

All in all, Pope Leo concludes that “we cannot consider AI to be morally neutral. In reality, every technical tool embodies choices and priorities through what it measures, ignores, and optimizes, and how it classifies people and situations.”

A civilization of love

After weighing the dangers of AI and the potential responses, Pope Leo takes an unexpected turn in the fifth chapter of *Magnifica Humanitas*, entitled “Culture of power and civilization of love.” Here, in an argument that strongly reflects the influence of St. Augustine’s *City of God*, the Pope decries what he sees as the widespread acceptance of conflict as a norm for human interactions, the ambition to build a “culture of power.” He proposes instead a “civilization of love,” motivated by Christian faith. In fact he suggests that the appeal of exotic new ideologies reflects a sense of emptiness that true faith can fill:

In the promises of transhumanism and some posthumanist currents of thought, which seek an enhanced and almost disembodied humanity, we recognize a yearning that is of concern to us, namely the need for a fuller life, less exposed to limitations and suffering. Yet the Incarnation opens a different pathway.

The encyclical ends, as it must, in an appeal for faith, because only through the life of faith can we nurture the balanced outlook that could properly guide the development of AI, or any other powerful tool. Pope Leo reminds us:

When we embrace the possibility of transcending ourselves through God’s grace, we do not deny our nature, nor do we become less human.... Herein lies the radical departure from Promethean dreams: what saves humanity is not enhanced self-sufficiency, but a relationship that liberates, a communion that transforms. In this light, a technology that merely classifies and optimizes what already exists can, however unintentionally, become an obstacle to change and growth. For an algorithm, an error is a flaw to be corrected; for a person, however, an error can be a catalyst for profound change. A person’s future is not calculable, but depends on one’s freedom—elevated by the inexhaustible grace of God—and on the relationships cultivated.

[Analysis by Phil Lawler]

That community is already in the process of dissolution where each man begins to eye his neighbor as a possible enemy, where nonconformity with the accepted creed, political as well as religious, is a mark of disaffection; where denunciation, without specification or backing, takes the place of evidence; where orthodoxy chokes freedom of dissent; where faith in the eventual supremacy of reason has become so timid that we dare not enter our convictions in the open lists, to win or lose

-- Judge Learned Hand

We Should Not ‘Integrate’ Our Military with Any Foreign Nation!

RON PAUL • JUNE 8, 2026 • 500 WORDS • 14 COMMENTS • 13 NEW

The Unz Review • An Alternative Media Selection
A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the American Mainstream Media

Not since the notorious 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) provided for indefinite detention of American citizens, has the annual funding bill been as misused as this year. Embedded in the bill is an insult to every American who values our national sovereignty. The NDAA’s Section 224, the “United States-Israel Defense Technology Cooperation Initiative,” would “integrate” the Israeli military with our own, fusing technology, production, intelligence-sharing, and more.

As Ben Freeman wrote last week in *Responsible Statecraft*:

“The US and Israel already work together heavily on missile defense, but this provision would greatly expand coordination to seemingly every area of defense tech, including AI, quantum, autonomous systems, directed energy, cyber, biotech, and many more. It also proposes ‘network integration’ and ‘data fusion.’ In other words, the US military’s data could soon be the Israeli military’s data.”

It is hard to think of a more “America last” position than handing the keys to the Pentagon (and our intelligence community) to a foreign country.

The insanity of Section 224 is made even more clear with news over the weekend that the Pentagon has raised to “critical” the threat level of Israel spying on the United States and its officials!

We should not “integrate” our military with any foreign country or organization, but integrating with a country that is a “critical” espionage threat to our national security? How does this make any sense?

The “problem” for American lawmakers is that after the killing in Gaza and now Lebanon, the American people – particularly younger Americans – have turned sharply against the US relationship with Israel. This foreign entanglement has sucked billions from the US treasury over the decades, and it has sucked us into endless conflict in the Middle East, including the current US war on Iran.

Rather than listen to the will of their constituents, Congress has decided to defy the wishes of Americans in favor of the wishes of a foreign government. AIPAC largely controls our Congress and passing Section 224 would be a great victory for the foreign lobby.

It should come as no surprise that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu endorses Section 224. He may have written it for all we know!

Should Section 224 remain in the NDAA, it would essentially remove future Congresses from any role in determining what level of support, cooperation, and oversight should be included in the US relationship with Israel. It would be worse even than President Obama’s 10 year guaranteed US financial support for Israel. Funding would not only be on autopilot, but the US would be further drawn into Israel’s multiple wars with its neighbors. Worse even than backing up Israel in its regional wars, the wars themselves would become ours.

Americans must speak out against plans to integrate our military with any foreign country. What we should be doing is disentangling from these overseas obligations, whether they be NATO or support for Ukraine or backing Taiwan against China.

We already spend more than a trillion dollars a year on our own military and our national debt is nearing \$40 trillion. Taking on the obligation to fight even more wars overseas will hasten our bankruptcy. Section 224 must be stricken from the NDAA and it is up to every American who cares about our sovereignty to demand that Congress do so.

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