

Remembering William Borah

Chronicles

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Early American Populist (1865-1940)

by John Gizzi

LONG BEFORE DONALD TRUMP AND THE MAKE America Great Again movement, before Pat Buchanan and his Buchanan Brigades, at a time when the terms “populism” and “nationalism” were seen as incompatible with the Republican Party, there was William Borah.

Eighty-six years after his death, still revered in his home state of Idaho (where he holds the record as its longest-serving U.S. senator and is honored with a statue in the National Statuary Hall), William Edgar Borah is inarguably a figure of historical consequence. He is also a precursor and midwife—if not a founding father—of the increasingly dominant populist faction within the Republican Party.

Borah began his political career as a Republican who broke ranks with his party during the 1896 election to support the presidential campaign of populist Democrat William Jennings Bryan. Borah was inevitably a figure who upset so-called regular Republicans with his often contrarian stands. When he was elected to the Senate in March 1907, he was a self-styled “Bryan Republican” who reached across the aisle to support measures such as popular election of senators (before the 17th Amendment of 1913, U.S. senators were appointed by state legislatures).

When Democrat Woodrow Wilson was elected president in 1912, Bryan backed much of Wilson's New Freedom agenda—but not all of it. He was one of 25 senators who opposed the 1913 Federal Reserve Act, which created the central bank system that oversees interest rates.

Borah felt there was too much power in the hands of too few. Like Pat Buchanan generations later, the Idahoan completely distrusted Wall Street. Just as Borah railed against the Fed and the big banks for the crash that brought about the Great Depression, Buchanan would denounce the “idiot bankers,” and “the Big Kahuna ... the Federal Reserve” for the financial panic of 2008.

Borah reluctantly supported Wilson's declaration of war during World War I. But he later became an “irreconcilable,” those whom Wilson bitterly decried as “that little band of willful men” who stopped U.S. entry into the League of Nations. Borah also used his influence as chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to keep the U.S. out of the World Court.

The Gem State lawmaker's commitment to noninterventionism and avoiding war at all costs was lifelong and unyielding. Were he in the Senate today, Borah would surely question the wisdom of U.S. military actions in Venezuela, Cuba, and Iran, having opposed during the 1930s “gunboat diplomacy” and America's heavy hand in Latin America.

He also fiercely opposed U.S. involvement in the war in Europe during the late 1930s and, in what was called the Great Debate of 1939, Borah led a bipartisan coalition of senators who stopped Roosevelt's repeal of the Neutrality Act, which the president tried to do in order to give aid to nations at war with Germany.

“I am proudest of doing what little I have been able to do to keep us out of Europe,” he told reporters. “I mean in terms of abiding by George Washington's advice to avoid entangling commitments. I do not mean isolation in terms of trade and economic matters and so forth.”

Borah rose to prominence at a time when technologies like the internet, social media, and television were beyond

the imagination of even the Buck Rogers comics that ran in the daily newspapers. When newspapers and radio were the only mass media, Borah dominated those formats through his masterful oratorical prowess. With his booming basso profundo voice, big gesturing hands, and shock of black hair, the gentleman from Idaho cut a compelling figure on the Senate floor, and he could pack the press and visitors' galleries on any day he chose to speak.

Borah had honed his natural oratorical skill through his experience as a trial lawyer and during his brief stint as a Shakespearean actor. He rose to international fame with his crowning achievement, his Nov. 19, 1919, speech against the League of Nations, which is considered one of the greatest speeches ever delivered in the Senate, and which dealt a deathblow to President Wilson's idealistic plan. His remarks were so eloquent and persuasive that senators openly wept at his conclusion. Afterward, the Senate's presiding officer and Wilson's own vice president, Thomas Marshall, sent Borah a note that read, “Even a mummy on a pedestal could not remain silent after such a speech.” The British ambassador, Viscount Grey, remarked, “I have watched this debate most carefully and in all my experience, I have never heard a debate on a higher plane than that was conducted by Senator Borah.”

Borah had been considered a potential Republican presidential candidate since his freshman term in the Senate, and speculation about his ambitions grew along with his fame. Yet Borah was also independently minded and irritated Republican leaders by breaking with the party line. He was also not likely to accept playing second fiddle as a vice presidential candidate. An apocryphal story holds that in 1924 President Calvin Coolidge asked the rising political star if he was interested in a place on the national ticket. Borah is said to have replied without hesitation, “Which place, Mr. President?”

He was most interested in the job in 1936, when a poll of party chieftains showed him to be the favorite. Nevertheless, the GOP leaders who then controlled the nomination process opted for the more moderate and more malleable candidate, Kansas Governor Alf Landon—probably because they realized that Borah was uncontrollable.

In a eulogy following Borah's death in 1940, Sen. Arthur Vandenberg, of Michigan, hailed his colleague from Idaho as one of those senators “in the company of [Henry] Clay, [Daniel] Webster, and [James G.] Blaine as a statesman who failed the presidency but outshone successful rivals.”

Borah once expressed this idea more simply in 1928, telling his supporters, “I would rather be Borah than be president.”



THE SON OF A PROSPEROUS FARMER AND DEVOUT Presbyterian, William Borah was born in Fairfield, Illinois, in 1865. The future senator's “first love was not statesmanship or politics or even the law, but the theatre,” C. O. Johnson wrote in his biography, *Borah of Idaho*. “His first ambition was to be an actor.” While working on his father's farm, he practiced his oratory before the mules. The call of the stage was so strong that young Borah ran away from home to join an itinerant Shakespearean theater troupe. He secured the role of Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*, but after three weeks without wages and a dwindling food supply, he returned home for his parents' love and a guarantee of three meals a day.

Borah decided to become a lawyer rather than an actor and, while living with his sister Sue and her husband in Lyons, Kansas, began studies at the University of Kansas.

A bout with tuberculosis, however, stopped Borah from securing a degree. Under his sister's care, he conquered tuberculosis and, under the aegis of her lawyer-husband, began "reading for the law"—a practice widely accepted in the U.S. at the time, through which one could become an attorney with neither a college nor law school degree.

Borah served a stint as Lyons' city attorney before deciding, like so many of his generation, to "go West" to make his fortune. He went as far as his meager savings would take him, stopping at Boise, Idaho, which was then the "wild West"—a town full of cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and gamblers. It was in that frontier town where Borah's legal career flourished, and he became a renowned lawyer.

In celebrated trials, Borah successfully prosecuted one Jack Davis for the murder of two sheepherders (though Davis was later pardoned), and in 1907 tried William "Big Bill" Haywood, along with two other members of the Western Federation of Miners, for the murder of Governor Frank Steunenberg during a miner's strike. Haywood was acquitted in large part because his attorney was the most celebrated American lawyer of all time: Clarence Darrow. Though Borah lost the trial, Darrow praised the young prosecutor as "the ablest man" with whom he had ever dueled in court.

After those high-profile trials, Borah's prominence in the legal profession soared, and he landed big retainers, including from Idaho's largest lumber and mining companies. Borah "had amassed \$100,000 before he went to Washington," *Current Biography* wrote in a 1940 profile of Borah just after his death. In 1907, \$100,000 was worth the equivalent of \$3.5 million today—a tidy sum for a man of humble origin to have amassed by his early 40s.

With his financial situation well secured, Borah plunged into politics. He became the Republican state chairman and in 1895 married Mary McConnell, daughter of Idaho's Republican governor, William J. McConnell. Borah had met "the boss's daughter" while campaigning for her father.

Like many Republicans who considered themselves "progressive," Borah was attracted to the 36-year-old Democratic nominee for president, William Jennings Bryan. Borah, in fact, tried to run for Congress in 1896 as a "Bryanite Republican" and stumped on a platform of reigning in banks and other big businesses, instituting the popular election of senators, and a graduated income tax.

It goes without saying that such a platform did not endear the young Republican hopeful to the more conservative elements in his party. Borah lost his first bid for office that year, as he did in a subsequent bid for the U.S. Senate. That was in 1904, when senators were still elected not by popular vote but by state legislatures.

"Send me absolutely free or not at all," Candidate Borah told the legislators. They opted for the latter because he would not go along with a deal forged by the ruling caucus in the legislature. After years of speaking out against what he called "King Caucus," Borah was finally picked for Idaho's other Senate seat in 1908.



MUCH AS CONTEMPORARY REPUBLICANS SUCH AS Rand Paul, Thomas Massie, Josh Hawley, and JD Vance have at times broken with the party over matters of principle, freshman Senator William Borah of Idaho was widely noticed by the press for often going against the grain of the Republican establishment. Borah frequently sided with Democrats against his party's leadership in order to enact populist reforms.

When Democrat Woodrow Wilson came to the presidency in 1912, Borah eagerly pledged to help the new president pass legislation that he believed would improve the lives of common Americans. "If you ask me if I am a Republican, I answer 'yes,'" Borah said, "As I understand Republican doctrines. I am a Progressive, but I want to fight inside the old party."

How could someone, a modern reader may wonder, agree with the reform agenda of Democrats and, at the same time, insist they "understand Republican principles?" That Borah could proudly claim both sums up the philosophy of populism, both in his time and ours. Populism follows no set party line but borrows from disparate ideological dishes.

"It depends on what populists you're talking about," Georgetown University Prof. Michael Kazin, author of *The Populist Persuasion* and the much-praised biography of *Bryan A Godly Hero*, said in an interview for this article. "As I've argued for decades, it's an essentially contested concept."

Using Kazin's definition of populism as an adaptable ideology, one can easily identify an undercurrent of populist thought that has existed in both parties from Borah, to George Wallace, to Ronald Reagan in his early presidential campaigns, to Pat Buchanan and Donald Trump. All would, on occasion, veer outside of the traditional boundaries of left and right in order to speak directly to the concerns of working Americans who felt abused by both parties.

David Pietrusza, author of six much-praised books on presidential election years, put it another way. "If populists favored either a conservative or a liberal ideology, well, they would just be conservatives or liberals," he said in an interview for this article. "But they are not. They march to the beat of their own drum—and often that drum is designed to launch a parade of disaffected, angry voters."

Borah's cooperation with the Democrats suddenly ended after the Great War, when he perceived that Wilson's agenda was no longer helping the common man against wealthy business interests, but empowering a new foe: big government. Wilson's post-World War I plan for a League of Nations, in which nations of the world would debate and vote on international issues rather than go to war, set off alarm bells for Borah. This would be an offense against the sovereignty of nations, he felt, and a violation of George Washington's admonition to avoid "entangling alliances."

In 1919, Wilson took the unprecedented step of going on a nationwide whistle-stop campaign not for an election, but to promote the League of Nations treaty. Borah became the face of the opposition to Wilson's plans and shadowed the president's travels with his own cross-country tour. In the Senate, Borah led the opposition to the treaty, which the pro-Wilson press attacked as "The Battalion of Death" (the League of Nations was supposed to end all war, after all). Borah's spell-binding Nov. 19 address on the Senate floor killed the League of Nations once and for all.

President Wilson was known to hold grudges, but surprisingly, he held no quarrel with the Idaho senator. One day the retired president was being driven through Washington and spotted Borah crossing the street. He remarked to his companions in the automobile, "There is one irreconcilable whom I can respect."

Borah earned a new nickname after his victory against the League of Nations, "The Great Opposer," which was still in currency in 1926, when he broke with Republican President Calvin Coolidge by opposing the bipartisan move to join the World Court. Coolidge, upon hearing that Borah had a morning regimen of horseback riding for exercise at Washington's Rock Creek Park, quipped, "I'm amazed he

can ride at all. I was under the impression that a rider had to go in the same direction as his horse!”

Of his own independence and propensity to sometimes work with the opposition party, Borah said, “I will travel with the devil if he’s going in my direction.”

The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 provided Republican Borah with the opportunity to cross party lines again and support some of the New Deal agenda. He played a key role in the enactment of the Glass-Steagall Act, which separated risky trading and investment from traditional community banking activities. President Clinton’s repeal of that act in 1999 was a key cause of the 2008 financial crisis.

Again, Borah broke with the Democrats when their agenda switched from reform to government control. Roosevelt’s plan to enlarge the Supreme Court and thus make it more judicially sympathetic to the New Deal estranged Borah from his administration. As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he cast one of the deciding votes to kill Roosevelt’s court-packing plan.

As the former chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Borah remained consistent in his view that all alternatives to war must be pursued to avoid the risk of Americans losing their lives unnecessarily. He sought to enact legislation outlawing war as a means of resolving conflicts.

In the late 1930s, as war in Europe loomed large and talk of U.S. involvement was increasingly audible, Borah sought to visit Germany and to convince Hitler to abandon his claims over Poland. The German government, aware of Borah’s reputation as one of the best-known American politicians, not only approved the trip but offered to pay for it. Borah changed his mind, deciding that such a trip would be politically harmful, but regretted that decision after the German invasion of Poland in September 1939. “Lord, if I could only have talked to Hitler, all this might have been averted,” Borah told William Kinsey Hutchinson, Washington bureau chief of the International News Service.



ON JAN. 19, 1940, WILLIAM BORAH AWAKENED with an illness beginning with a cerebral hemorrhage and died soon after. He was 74. As has been said of other politicians who took their curtain call in life before potentially damaging events could occur, it might also be said that William Borah knew when to die. Mourned by political friends and opponents alike, he went out as a respected titan of the Senate in Washington and an unbeatable politician at home—“the Big Potato,” as Idahoans called him.

Had he lived, it is possible he would have faced the same retribution inflicted upon other politicians who opposed aiding the Allies prior to Japan’s declaration of war on the U.S. Republican Sens. Gerald Nye of North Dakota and

Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, and New York Rep. Hamilton Fish all lost re-election in wartime or in immediate postwar elections because they were seen as too committed to noninterventionism and waited a little too long to call out Hitler as a menace.

Borah had been virtually unchallenged in all his re-elections. Whether or not he might have avoided any postwar retribution for his noninterventionism, he might have been done in by charges of anti-Semitism. Though Borah did denounce Hitler after the reports of Jewish persecution following Kristallnacht in 1937, he also opposed expanding the immigration of Jewish refugees to the U.S., on the grounds that too many Americans were suffering from the Great Depression, and an influx of immigrants would create even more competition for scarce jobs.

Borah also may have dodged a few bullets simply by living at a time when the personal lives of politicians were off-limits to the press and public. Although his marriage to his wife Mary—whom he called Little Borah—seemed solid and the couple inseparable, Borah did have his dalliances. He had an affair with Teddy Roosevelt’s eldest daughter, Alice Roosevelt Longworth, and fathered her daughter. The mischievous Alice wanted to subtly acknowledge the parentage by naming the child Deborah (“De Borah”), but her husband—and House Speaker Nick Longworth—wanted to avoid scandal, and shot that plan down. Nevertheless, Washington wags liked to call baby Paulina “Aurora Borah Alice.”

Today, William Borah’s bronze statue is in the U.S. Capitol, and no one talks of putting it in mothballs. The Borah Foundation, under the auspices of the University of Idaho, holds regular forums on world peace. At worst, his unforgettable regret, “If only I could have talked to Hitler” is still cited as an example of gross naivety about dealing with tyrants. The late pundit Charles Krauthammer mentioned it in three columns urging a stronger hand in dealing with China, Russia, and Iran; some bring it up today to characterize President Trump’s efforts to negotiate with Iran.

But for the most part, those who care to remember William Borah recall him in much the way as occasional friend and foe Franklin Roosevelt did upon his death in 1940:

We shall miss him, and shall mourn him, and long remember the superb courage that was his,” the president said. “He dared often to stand alone and even at times to subordinate party interest when he presumably saw a divergence of party interest with the national interest.

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By Donald DeMarco

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Truth Under Assault

Flannery O'Connor, who had an admirable propensity for being honest, made the remark that "the truth will make you odd." She would not be surprised, if she were around today, to learn that a dubious student-led protest was sufficient for authorities to remove her name from one of the residence halls at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore. More than 80 scholars and authors signed a letter protesting the change. But in the end, truth was sacrificed to political correctness.

Miss O'Connor was understating the matter. The truth not only makes you odd, it makes you vulnerable. Stating the truth can ruin you financially. A former school board trustee in British Columbia was fined \$750,000 for persistently saying true things about the LGBTQ+ coalition. If the truth offends, it must be counteracted. Popular comedian John Cleese cancelled his appearance in British Columbia, fearing that he might be fined for anything he might say.

New York State, in full support of the transgender movement, and with virtually no opposition, passed a law that applies to all long-term care facilities in the state. What it means to the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne New York is not something that they can accept without violating their Catholic faith. They are dedicated to the Galilean who proclaimed that the truth will make you free and not to the untruth approved by New York State legislators.

The law prohibits single-sex rooms and bathrooms, and it requires the care providers to use patients' preferred pronouns. The Hawthorne residence has operated for nearly 125 years without experiencing any need for what the new mandate requires of them. Superior General Mother Edward has stated that

it is an untruth to say that a male should go into a female patient's room. You're just trying to contort things, for whatever reason. So we have to stand by the truth of what has been taught to us in the natural law. It is not to be changed.

That truth accords with both Scripture and common sense: a male is a male, and a female is a female.

The New York Assembly passed the bill by a 144-2 count. Governor Kathy Hochul saw the bill as a way of avoiding discrimination, though she was not particularly concerned about discriminating against the Catholic faith of the Hawthorne sisters. "Hate, she exclaimed, "will never have a place in New York." This is the same governor who told 5.4 million New York State Republicans to "Just jump on a bus and head down to Florida where you belong O.K.? You are not New Yorkers."

If this is not hatred, let alone discrimination, it can surely pass for it. It is clearly an abdication of a governor's responsibility to all the citizens of New York. Was she not aware that some New York Republicans might be transgendered? She could be a little kinder to the dedicated Dominican sisters.

On June 18, 2025, the United States Supreme Court, in *United States v. Skrmetti*, ruled 6-3 that the Tennessee bill that bans doctors from providing puberty blockers and hormone therapy to transgender minors does not violate the Fourth Amendment Equal Protection Clause. Therefore, the state of Tennessee—and 25 other states that shared this ban—can continue to outlaw these procedures without fear of governmental intrusion.

Chief Justice John Roberts, who authored the Court's majority, indicated that it is ill-advised for minors who are confused about their sex to choose a procedure that is potentially dangerous.

"It was not improper," he wrote,

to conclude that the kids benefit from additional time to "appreciate their sex" before embarking on body-altering paths. Nor is it improper for the state to protect minors from procedures that "encourage them to become disdainful of their sex" and thus at risk for serious psychiatric conditions.

In other words, minors should take the time to know the truth about their sex.

Senator Tom Cotton commended the decision for "upholding a state's rights to protect kids from barbaric transgender procedures." Senator Mike Lee said that the ruling was concerned about "protecting kids from surgical mutilation." Attorney General Pam Bondi also agreed that the ruling would "protect children from genital mutilation."

In his book *The Truth of Things*, scholar, critic, and award-winning poet and novelist Marion Montgomery decries the fact that people are given social encouragement to invent their own reality: "Not *I am I by the grace of God*. . .but *I am I by the grace of my own self-intent to be independent of all existence; I am this which I name*." The late nationally-syndicated political columnist William Murchison applies this unrealistic approach to self-identity to the transgender issue:

In declaring children and teenagers reliable enough to assess their own sexuality with parents and white-coated doctors standing ready to approve their choice, the trans movement has embraced a kind of personal autonomy unknown to, and unthought of by, virtually any who ever have inhabited this planet.

It is sobering to return to a view of life that respects truth and a way of thinking that assigns a higher place to truth than to personal vanity or political power. For St. Thomas Aquinas, "The purpose of the study of philosophy is not to learn what others have thought, but to learn how the truth of things stands." In following the truth of things, we discover a path to a better life. Anything else is confusion and tumult.

Sons And Daughters, Not Products: The Morality Of Embryonic Gene Editing

Shepherds of the Flock

The Voice of Our Bishops and Clergy

"Genetic manipulation becomes arbitrary and unjust when it reduces life to an object, when it forgets that it is dealing with a human subject, capable of intelligence and freedom, worthy of respect whatever may be their limitations; or when it treats this person in terms of criteria not founded on the integral reality of the human person, at the risk of infringing upon his dignity" (Pope St. John Paul II, *Address to the World Medical Association*, 1983).

Earlier this month, a team of researchers at Columbia University, led by the geneticist Dieter Egli, announced that they had rewritten the genetic code of human embryos at the earliest stage of life, when each tiny human being was still a single cell.

The team used a newer tool called base editing, which rewrites a single letter of the genetic code rather than slicing through both strands of DNA, as the more familiar CRISPR (or Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats) does.

The appeal of this method is precision. As *The New York Times* explains, "Rather than chop out a segment of DNA [as in older CRISPR technologies], base editors made a tiny nick in one strand. They could then guide the cell to fix the mutation."

The Newest Form Of Eugenic Ideology

It's important to keep in mind that *all* experimentation on human embryos involves the creation of human beings, and then their deliberate destruction. This is the horror that unites all experimentation on human embryos, and renders the practice universally morally repugnant, no matter the intention of the experiments.

But there is a special horror in these recent experiments: namely, the way they advance humanity one step further down the path of normalized, commercialized, profit-driven eugenics.

The New York Times notes bluntly that the new experiments are "an achievement that could open the way to babies engineered with particular characteristics."

While the technology can theoretically be used to cure genetic conditions, the *Times* notes, "it might also be used to select desired traits — a practice that some ethicists have argued is nothing short of eugenics."

Indeed. This is eugenics, pure and simple. Rather than the concentration camp or the forced sterilizations and abortions that were practiced so widely around the world in the early 20th century, however, this is a neater, tidier eugenics, covered over with the reassuring scientific respectability of the lab and the technician with the white lab coat.

Even Genetic Engineers Are Concerned

Interestingly, however, some of the strongest expressions of alarm at the experiments have come from within the field of genetic engineering itself.

Alexis Komor, who helped develop base editing, warned that the study broke a long-standing "gentleman's agreement" among researchers and amounts to a "gateway to em-

bryo editing to do enhancements" that "kind of opens the floodgates."

Fyodor Urtov, a geneticist at the University of California, Berkeley, was blunter: What the team had really produced, he said, was a how-to manual for "baby improvers," instructions "for forays beyond the ethical pale."

As *Futurism* reports, the research is supported by a company called Nucleus Genomics, which attracted considerable controversy back in July of 2025. As *Scientific American* reported at the time:

"An understandable ethics outcry greeted the June announcement of a software platform that offers aspiring parents 'genetic optimization' of their embryos. Touted by Nucleus Genomics' CEO Kian Sadeghi, the \$5,999 service, dubbed 'Nucleus Embryo,' promised optimization of traits like heart disease and cancer resistance, as well as intelligence, longevity, body mass index, baldness, eye color, hair color, and left-handedness. It also promised to weed out what makes someone an alcoholic."

These latest experiments are simply the next step toward developing "designer babies." Except this time, researchers are developing technologies not just to "weed out" embryos deemed "unfit," but are going one step further: actually "designing" the genetic code of an embryo at the precise level of the individual gene.

As the chief clinical officer of Nucleus Genomics openly and enthusiastically told the *Times*, base editing technology "gets us closer" to being able to optimize embryos before implantation in IVF. (In vitro fertilization [IVF] is an immoral action that violates the dignity of human life, treating children as commodities instead of as *gifts* to be received.)

The Evolution Of The Eugenic Mentality

In a way, none of this is particularly new.

As I wrote just last week, our culture already routinely identifies the preborn children it deems defective and destroys them. In the United States, roughly two of every three preborn children diagnosed with Down syndrome before birth are aborted. In England the figure approaches nine in ten; in Iceland it is all but total.

In China and India, meanwhile, the preference for sons over daughters has produced, through sex-selective abortion, populations skewed by tens of millions of "missing" women.

And, as *Scientific American* pointed out when reporting on the dystopian "genetic enhancing" services offered by Nucleus Genomics, eugenic genetic selection of embryos is already commonplace around the world:

"Parents-to-be have utilized preimplantation genetic diagnosis as part of in vitro fertilization for decades. After a set of fertilized embryos are created by IVF, a sample of DNA from each is extracted and tested. The parents can then select which embryo or embryos to implant based on their genetic profiles."

Scientific American noted that this practice has become so routine that "there is little ethical hand-wringing about parents who use

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The Wanderer

By FR. SHENAN J. BOQUET

the technology to prevent transmitting a horrific disease to their child, or who opt not to implant an embryo that might not develop.”

Embryo editing, then, is not so much some radical new development in science or culture. The door to eugenics was flung open decades ago, with the routinization of selective abortion based upon genetic testing, and the selection of embryos for IVF. Embryo editing simply moved the practice one step earlier.

In Nigeria, HLI’s pro-life formation for nursing students addresses ethical issues raised by reproductive technologies. One student commented, “I am

now better equipped to share my pro-life position on IVF with others. I will use what I have learned in my professional career to educate my patients and everyone else about the beauty and sanctity of human life.”

The Temptation To Redesign Humanity

Once we accept that some genetic traits should be eliminated (as we already have), no clear moral boundary is left, and the logic shifts inevitably from preventing disease to designing preferred outcomes. Thus, the child ceases to be a person received in love and becomes an object of selection.

As Robert Cardinal Sarah, one of the Church’s most prophetic voices on these questions, wrote in *The Day Is Now Far Spent*:

“Already techniques of artificial procreation, pre-implantation embryonic triage, and universalized prenatal diagnosis of genetic illness have little by little inoculated the popular mind with eugenic ideas. It is considered normal to eliminate embryos, in other words, very tiny human beings, who do not correspond to our norm. Who will set the norm tomorrow? . . . Does transhumanism seek to create a master race? These questions are terrifying and blood-chilling.”

In the 1983 address quoted at the beginning of this column, Pope St. John Paul II foresaw this move toward transhumanism. He noted that the term “genetic engineering” is ambiguous. On the one hand, it covers “adventure-some endeavors aimed at promoting I know not what kind of superman,” and on the other it covers “desirable and salutary interventions aimed at the correction of anomalies such as certain hereditary illnesses.”

The second form of genetic engineering restores what was broken. The first sets out with the goal to create an “improved” human — a “superman.” These new experiments fall squarely into the first category.

The Human Person Is Not A Rough Draft

Beneath all of this lies a single, deeper error: the belief that the human being is a rough draft in need of correction.

The financiers pouring money into these ventures speak openly of “designing our own descendants.” This is the ideology known as transhumanism, which regards every human limit, including aging, suffering, and death, not as part of our nature but as a flaw to be engineered away.

In his recent encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV reminds us that “technology is never neutral, because it takes on the characteristics of those who devise, finance, regulate, and use it” (n. 9). A base editor in the hands of a company that sells genetic optimization is not a neutral instrument; it carries the purposes of those who sell it, who would reduce the human person to “a resource to be used and exploited,” valued only “on what they achieve or produce” (n. 51).

Against this, Pope Leo recovers a truth the upgraders have forgotten: our limits are not defects at all. “Humanity flourishes not despite limitations,” he writes, “but often through them” (n. 118).

The families who raise children with Down syndrome know this without being told. They received their children as gifts rather than projects, and were enlarged in soul by the ones the world would have screened out. The choice before us, Pope Leo says, is between building “a new Tower of Babel” and building “the city in which God and humanity dwell together” (n. 1).

Base editing of human embryos for eugenic reasons is but one more brick in the Tower of Babel that the transhumanists have been building for decades.

Children Are Sons And Daughters, Not Products

A child is not a product to be optimized, a consumer good to be upgraded, or a project to be perfected. He is a son or a daughter of God, willed and loved by his Creator, stamped from his first hour with a dignity that no editor’s tool can raise and no diagnosis can lower.

This was the wisdom Pope St. John Paul II offered the world’s physicians in 1983: “First oppose everything harmful, then seek out and pursue the good.” We may, and we should, develop genuine therapies that heal the sick, exercising the gift of reason as God’s coworkers in creation. But we are not the masters of human life. “God alone is the master of human life and of its integrity,” he reminded those doctors.

As Cardinal Sarah put it in *The Day Is Now Far Spent*:

“If we want to remain human, we must accept our creaturely nature and once again turn to the Creator. The world has chosen to organize itself without God, to live without God, to think about itself without God. It is in the process of making a terrible experiment: wherever God is not, hell is there. What is hell if not the privation of God? The transhumanist ideology illustrates this perfectly. Without God, nothing remains but what is not human, the post-human. More than ever the alternative is simple: God or nothing!”

Our lawmakers must do everything in their power to keep these Frankenstein experiments from advancing.

The rest of us, meanwhile, must fill the world with love by receiving the children God sends as they come, the strong and the weak alike, the ones who pass every test and the ones who fail them all. And we must stand beside the families who opened their homes to the children the world told them to refuse.

The axiom that every human being possesses innate dignity from the first moment of conception, including those beset by illness, suffering, or who are less “useful,” is not a limit on scientific progress. It is the ground on which a “civilization of love” is made possible, over and against the technocratic reduction of the human person to raw material to be manipulated for extrinsic purposes, which produces the culture of death.

By **Jacob G. Hornberger**

The Future of Freedom Foundation

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Dying for Nothing

Seventeen military personnel have died in President Trump's war on Iran. Compared to the 58,200 military personnel who were killed in the Vietnam War, that's not a large number ... well, unless one happens to be among those 17 or among their friends or family members. In that case, 17 becomes an extremely large number.

But there is one thing in common between those 58,200 military personnel who died in the Vietnam War and those 17 military personnel who have died in Trump's war on Iran: They all died for nothing.

No, they didn't die for their country. No, they didn't die defending our freedom. No, they didn't die to make the world safe for democracy. They died for nothing.

If we are ever to get America back on the right track — toward the restoration of a limited-government republic (and the dismantling of the national-security state) and the restoration of a non-interventionist foreign policy (i.e., no more foreign wars, coups, sanctions, embargoes, assassinations, torture, indefinite detention, etc.), it is imperative that the American people accept that reality: The soldiers in the Vietnam War died for nothing, and the soldiers dying in Trump's war on Iran are dying for nothing. For that matter, those U.S. troops who died in the U.S. government's wars on Afghanistan and Iraq also died for nothing.

The most recent ones who died were killed at U.S. imperial bases in Jordan and Iraq. So, I suppose U.S. officials would argue that they died for empire. But dying for empire is the same thing as dying for nothing.

In the Vietnam War, many of those 58,200 dead men and women were forced to serve in the military, where they were then ordered to go to Vietnam. That's what the draft (i.e., conscription) was all about. According to U.S. officials, U.S. troops were being forced to serve so that they could be sent to Vietnam, where they could kill or die in the defense of our freedom here at home.

Many of the rich white boys were permitted to escape that plight. That's what the Reserves and the National Guard were for. The people who got to serve in Reserve units or Guard units weren't sent to Vietnam. Their job was to stay here at home and defend freedom from the Reds, who were supposedly coming to get us. That was what the old Cold War racket was all about — scaring the American people to death in order to expand the national-security establishment and its ever-growing army of "defense" contractors. Also, those going to college or law school, who ordinarily were well-to-do white kids, were given a deferment that enabled them to delay military service. There were also the affluent white kids whose doctors found physical conditions that would exempt them from military service.

Thus, many of those who were conscripted and sent to Vietnam to supposedly fight for our freedom were poor Blacks — that is, young men who lacked the political influence to get those coveted slots in the Reserves or National Guard and who couldn't afford to go to college. Of course, many of them must have been a bit befuddled over being told that they were dying for freedom given that here at home they were living under a system of racial segregation.

Needless to say, most, if not all, Blacks could see through this crooked and corrupt racket. Mohammad Ali put it best when he declared, "Man, I ain't got no quarrel with them Viet Cong. No Viet Cong ever called me n****r.... Why should they ask me to put on a uniform and go 10,000 miles from home and drop bombs and bullets on brown people in Vietnam while so-called Negro people in Louisville are treated like dogs and denied simple human rights?"

It's no different with the troops who are dying in Trump's war on Iran. They weren't forced to serve. They joined the military voluntarily. They can't say they didn't know that the U.S. government starts wars of aggression and maintains a huge empire of military bases in foreign countries. Nonetheless, even if they haven't been forced to serve through the draft, they still have died for nothing.

Of course, that's not what U.S. officials will tell the loved ones of the troops who are dying in Trump's war on Iran. They will tell them the same thing they told the family members of those 58,200 dead troops in the Vietnam War. They will tell them that they died defending our freedom here at home. Since it is difficult to acknowledge that one's son or daughter has died for nothing, it is a virtual certainty that the family and friends of those dead soldiers will convince themselves that their loved one died for our freedom rather than for nothing.

But reality is reality. The reality is that every single one of the soldiers who died in the Vietnam War died for nothing, the same thing that every single soldier who dies in Trump's war on Iran is dying for. The sooner Americans come to accept that reality, the better the chance of getting America back on the right track — toward freedom, peace, prosperity, and harmony with the people of the world.

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A state of war only serves as an excuse for domestic tyranny.

– Alexander Solzhenitsyn

The Sour Crude Problem: Why America's Refineries Depend on Imports and Why It Is Relevant to the Strait of Hormuz

LARRY C. JOHNSON • JULY 10, 2026 • 1,100 WORDS • 8 COMMENTS



Oil Refinery

The US/Israeli war with Iran has focused the world's attention on oil because of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. When the war started I thought oil was just oil. Okay... I was ignorant. But over the course of the last four months I have received quite an education from a couple of different experts in the field. If you want to understand one of the key reasons that Donald Trump signed the MoU, you need to understand why the US is dependent on sour crude oil, which comes out of the Persian Gulf. I will try to make it simple — About 65% of the US refineries are built to handle sour crude while the US oil industry primarily produces sweet crude. We need sour crude to produce diesel and aviation fuel. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz means that the US will not have enough sour crude to sustain current production levels of diesel and aviation fuel. That's the problem in a nutshell.

The United States is the largest crude oil producer in the world, pumping close to 13.8 million barrels per day. It is also, paradoxically, structurally dependent on imported crude oil — roughly 6 to 8 million barrels per day of it in recent years. The war with Iran and the months-long closure of the Strait of Hormuz exposed this paradox in the starkest possible terms: a country awash in its own oil found itself draining its Strategic Petroleum Reserve at record rates to keep diesel and jet fuel flowing. The explanation lies in a mismatch between the kind of oil America produces and the kind of oil its refineries were built to run — and the barrel now bridging that mismatch is being pulled from salt caverns with a finite structural lifespan.

Not All Crude Is Created Equal

Crude oil is classified along two principal axes: density (American Petroleum Institute aka API gravity) and sulfur content. "Light" crudes have high API gravity (roughly 35° and above); "heavy" crudes are denser. "Sweet" crude contains less than 0.5 percent sulfur by weight; "sour" crude contains more — the SPR's own specification defines sour as between 0.5 and 2.0 percent sulfur.

The shale revolution that transformed the United States into the world's top producer of almost exclusively light, sweet crude. *Permian*, *Bakken*, and *Eagle Ford* barrels typically run 40–50° API with minimal sulfur. That is excellent oil by most measures — easy to process, rich in gasoline-range molecules. But it is not what the American refining complex was designed to process.

The Refinery Mismatch

From the late 1980s through the 2000s, US Gulf Coast refiners invested tens of billions of dollars in "deep conversion" capacity: coking units, hydrocrackers, fluid catalytic crackers, and hydrotreaters. These investments were made on the near-universal expectation that domestic production would keep declining and the import slate would keep getting heavier and more sulfurous — *Mexican Maya*, *Venezuelan Merey*, *Saudi Arab Medium*, *Canadian bitumen*

blends. Complexity was the competitive moat: a refinery that could buy discounted heavy sour feedstock and still produce a full slate of clean products earned wider margins than a simple refinery running expensive sweet crude.

The shale boom arrived after that capital was already in the ground. The result is the US refining system is optimized for medium and heavy sour crude in a country that produces light sweet crude. Running a coking refinery on a pure light-sweet diet leaves the coker and the resid-upgrading units underutilized — destroying the very margin those units were built to capture — and creates operational problems, since very light crude overloads the naphtha and light-ends handling at the front of the plant. Nor can refiners simply blend their way out: mixing very light shale crude with heavy residues produces “dumbbell” blends that mimic a medium crude on paper but misbehave in the distillation tower, because the blend lacks the middle-boiling-range molecules that a genuine medium crude contains.

This is why the trade pattern looks the way it does. The United States exports roughly 4 million barrels per day of light sweet crude to refineries in Europe and Asia configured for it, while importing millions of barrels per day of heavier, sourer grades. Canada and Mexico supply about 70 percent of U.S. crude imports — Canadian heavy sour arrives by pipeline into the Midwest and Gulf Coast, a flow that hit records after the Trans Mountain expansion — with Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and, since the US kidnapping of Maduro, a resurgent Venezuela supplying much of the balance. This arrangement is not an accident or a policy failure in the ordinary sense; it is the rational outcome of a refining system whose configuration cannot be changed quickly or cheaply. With Saudi Arabia out of the picture, the US is forced to rely on a rapidly shrinking SPR.

So far the Trump administration has been able to postpone a supply crisis by drawing down the sour crude from the SPR. But the US will soon drain the SPR of the sour crude and will need an alternative... That means getting the Persian Gulf oil flowing back to America. Some experts believe that the shortage of sour crude will produce a spike in the price of diesel and aviation fuel as early as mid-July. Others believe the US can hang on until the middle of August. As long as the US continues to attack Iran, the prospects for a return to normal remain dim.

We should remember that in an area controlled by such a process as national socialism, or any similar philosophy of governmental direction, the question and definition of what human personality is and what human rights and fundamental freedoms are, rest with the dominant political power.

— Russell J. Clinchy, *Human Rights and the United Nations* [1952]

overthrow Muammar Gaddafi, yet Congress never authorized the intervention. The administration argued that the operation did not constitute “hostilities” under the War Powers Resolution because American forces faced limited risk and most of the killing was done by U.S. intelligence assets.

President Joe Biden continued this pattern through military operations in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, strikes against Iranian-backed militias — and by funding Ukraine’s war against Russia. The administration justified these actions primarily as force protection, counterterrorism, responses to attacks on U.S. personnel, or defense of democracy and sovereignty. None of these rationales substitutes for congressional authorization.

Moreover, Russia, Ukraine and the U.S. are members of the United Nations. Like the U.N. or not, the U.N. Charter is a treaty written by U.S. officials and ratified by the Senate. Under the Constitution, treaties are the supreme law of the land along with the Constitution itself. The U.N. Charter prohibits all war except for immediate defensive purposes or when authorized by the U.N. Security Council; neither of which is the case with Ukraine.

President Donald Trump famously campaigned against “endless wars,” yet his administration launched missile strikes against Syria in 2017 and 2018 without congressional approval, assassinated Iranian General Qassem Soleimani in Iraq in January 2020, commenced the current unlawful and meaningless war against Iran, now in its third stage of combat, and he has financed Israeli expansion — all without congressional authorization.

He has famously indicated that he rejects the constitutional role of treaties and the international laws written pursuant to them. He has even threatened to annihilate the Iranian/Persian civilization.

Those who believe that the Constitution means what it says condemn the underlying assumption that the United States should maintain a global military presence of nearly 800 bases worldwide in 80 countries. These bases, security guarantees and permanent deployments create continual opportunities for military entanglement.

Every intervention generates unintended consequences, some of which become the justification for the next intervention. History teaches that the interventions don’t liberate. They subordinate, control and dominate.

This cycle expands government power at home as well as abroad. It has given us mass incarceration, mass surveillance, mass attacks on speech.

The founders warned against precisely this dynamic. James Madison wrote that “of all the enemies to public liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded.” War concentrates power in the executive, increases public debt, expands surveillance, limits civil liberties and encourages secrecy.

A government organized around perpetual military readiness acquires the earmarks of an empire. Foreign policies of empires are based on dominance and force. Foreign policies of republics are based on commerce, diplomacy and genuine national defense. Military force should be reserved for defending the United States against actual or imminent attacks, not for remaking foreign societies, policing civil wars or pursuing humanitarian objectives.

From this perspective, the constitutional issue is inseparable from the policy issue. Even when intervention appears morally appealing or strategically prudent, allowing presidents to wage war unilaterally establishes precedents that future administrations will inevitably expand.

Executive power, once claimed, is never surrendered voluntarily.

The uniparty pattern in the past 36 years suggests that the problem is institutional rather than partisan. Republicans and Democrats alike have embraced increasingly unconstitutional theories of presidential war powers, while Congress has often acquiesced by avoiding politically difficult votes.

The result has been a steady transfer of the Constitution's most consequential power from the legislative branch to the executive. The result has also been millions of innocent deaths, trillions of wasted dollars and industrial scale destruction. Is America really safer, are Americans truly freer, because of all these wars? NO and Hell No; we are weaker, poorer, less safe and less free.

To learn more about Judge Andrew Napolitano, visit JudgeNap.com.

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Trump's War and the Decay of the American Soul

by Nolan Denaro | Jul 20, 2026 | 0 Comments

One thing that is always thrown by the wayside in times of war is the maintenance of the national soul. When faced with the inherent brutality of war, the emotions of the moment can overshadow the values we seek to uphold. When the job of maintaining this national soul is left to the state, – a group Murray Rothbard labeled a “centralized, regularized organization of theft” – more enticing projects tend to arise. Often those projects directly harm the citizens of the nation, as by the state’s very nature, they tend to involve aggression, theft, murder or coercion.

Despite the lack of care given by the government to our nation’s soul, it is nonetheless a core pillar of a cohesive country. It defines the virtues our country intends to project to the world.

The “national soul”

This concept is not new. Ronald Reagan famously referred to America as a “shining city upon a hill” in his 1988 farewell address to the nation. He explained that it was our country’s prioritization of freedom for our citizens which made us an example for the world to emulate.

Many have also outlined the danger of losing sight of our national soul. As the war in Iran escalates, and Donald Trump’s rhetoric and actions become increasingly concerning, I am reminded of John Quincy Adams’ famous Independence Day speech from 1821. In the address, he masterfully explains the danger of getting our nation trapped in a web of conflicts across the world and forgetting to focus on the liberty of our domestic population:

“Wherever the standard of freedom and Independence, has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will recommend the general cause by the countenance of her voice, and the benignant sympathy of her example. She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign Independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from *liberty* to *force*. The frontlet upon her brow would no longer beam with the ineffable splendor of Freedom and Independence; but in its stead would soon be substituted an Imperial Diadem, flashing in false and tarnished lustre the murky radiance of dominion and power. She might become the dictatress of the world. She would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit.”

Adams is precise and accurate in his warning. If our nation chooses to export force and war rather than the virtues of liberty, our spirit will be harmed in the process. We will lose track of what it is that makes America unique in the history of the globe, the way we showcase the success that can come when a nation is born out of a longing for liberty.

This warning has unfortunately not been heeded, at least not by those in positions of state power. Rather than focus on domestic liberty, the U.S. federal government has

decided its best means to influence the globe is through military force.

Embracing aggression

The U.S. federal government has engaged in non-stop military conflicts for decades, despite the threat to the American homeland being relatively small. Not only have these conflicts been counterproductive in forwarding the cause of freedom, but we are so far down the path of the collapse of the republic that the pretext has been essentially dropped. Now, rather than give us speeches about how Americans must support the cause of freeing a foreign population from their evil dictator, we instead get monstrous social media posts such as this from our president on Easter morning:

“Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day, all wrapped up in one, in Iran. There will be nothing like it!!! Open the F*ckin’ Strait, you crazy bastards, or you’ll be living in Hell – JUST WATCH! Praise be to Allah. President DONALD J. TRUMP”

While Trump didn’t follow through on this genocidal threat, it shows a lack of basic humanity. Careless as ever, the president showed no regard for the fact that he is speaking to the world as a representative of hundreds of millions of people, including millions of children, who do not wish to become entangled in a religious war that they have nothing to do with.

The whole war with Iran reeks of this same disregard for human life and basic morality. Not only has the rhetoric been shocking but so has the conduct. On February 28, 2026, the first day of the U.S.-Israeli joint military campaign against Iran, the United States struck an elementary school in Minab, killing over 100 schoolgirls. While questions regarding who was responsible for the strike were asked for days, it soon became apparent that the U.S. military was in fact the culprit. However, the U.S. government is still yet to admit this.

In fact, the official “investigation,” – which was the crutch Pete Hegseth used whenever he was asked about the strike – is supposedly still ongoing all these months later. In fact, CNN reported on July 16, 2026, that the U.S. military is still yet to conduct a standard review of the intelligence related to this airstrike.

I would like to believe (and I still do) that this was a tragic mistake. However, we cannot truly come to a conclusion on this saga until the U.S. government explains what happened here. Was this an accident? If so, everybody with the slightest sense of humanity must demand an apology. It is beyond reckless to claim to represent a population and simultaneously commit atrocities like this in their name, without showing an ounce of remorse.

The “Truth” Social Graft

Imperialism has led to the decay of America’s moral standing in the world. This has been seen for the last 25 years, as the U.S. federal government’s adventurism abroad has led to the death of millions and the destruction of nations. This decay has also manifested strategically. As we’ve seen throughout this war with Iran, the U.S. has struggled to get any tangible military wins. America is dangerously low on defensive weapons systems, this war has not achieved any of the goals the Trump administration originally set, and the U.S. has been unable to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, resulting in 20% of the world’s energy supply being unable to reach the global market.

At home, Americans have felt the energy crunch. Gas prices rose for a period of time due to the reduction in the global oil supply, and the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve is

dangerously low.

This was all totally predictable. If we simply observed the results of the other wars of the 21st century, we could see clearly that the money printed to fund them causes inflation, which leads to rising prices, and affects Americans in a direct financial manner. Our dollars simply don't go as far. Simultaneously, there are intangible effects. Social media has been flooded with the murderous social media posts of the president, videos of entire neighborhoods being bombed, and skies in Iran raining oil from the attacks on Iranian energy infrastructure.

The presidents' posts on Truth Social also represent a different kind of degradation in the soul of America. Trump's posts serve as de-facto official White House press releases and have the capability to drastically swing financial markets back and forth at a moment's notice.

With ethics having gone completely out the window, it is somewhat unsurprising to hear about the alleged insider trading activities surrounding this war. Over the course of the conflict, there have been many instances of massive trades being made on oil futures and in the stock market just minutes before major announcements were made by Trump regarding the starting and stopping of attacks on Iran.

To take it one step further, Truth Social, owned by Trump Media, is now offering users the chance to pay for early access to the president's posts.

The program, known as "Truth API," would give its users advanced information on the market-shifting announcements of President Trump, allowing them to make financial trades before the rest of the public knows about it. The Trump family are major stakeholders in Trump Media, and Donald Trump himself owns 41% of the company.

This quite literally means that Wall Street asset managers will be paying Donald Trump and his family in exchange for early access to his market-altering public statements.

We are talking about levels of corruption and greed that are unprecedented in modern history. It's disgusting, and it's beyond me how even the biggest Trump loyalist could defend this.

A decaying soul

This is the crumbing-empire style of governance. As the system degrades, everyone is trying to take as much as they can for themselves. In the end, they may be comfortable and wealthy as the country crumbles around them. Similarly, those who lack morals likely won't notice the darkness that arises as a result of their behavior. We on the other hand will be left to fend for ourselves with a diluted currency and a weakened sense of national spirit.

Why should we allow the nation of our ancestors to be irreversibly damaged by these sinister actors? The virtues of liberty have not died, and anger towards pointless wars has only grown in prominence within the American public discourse. There needs to be a reckoning in this country over the damage these wars have done to our national soul.

If America is to once again serve as a shining city for the world to emulate, we must finally have leaders who understand that you can be a constitutional republic or you can be the world empire, but you cannot be both.

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How to Honor the Dead US Service Members

RON PAUL • JULY 20, 2026 • 600 WORDS • 31 COMMENTS

Over the weekend the Pentagon announced that four more US soldiers have been killed in President Trump's war on Iran. That brings the total to 17, but many believe the real number of dead US servicemembers is much higher than that. The Pentagon has claimed it has no obligation to reveal how many military personnel have been injured, which suggests that number may be much higher than we are hearing. Many of these injuries will be horrific and life-altering.

Back on April 12th, President Trump told Fox News that Iran, "has no cards. Their navy is gone. Their air force is gone. Totally gone. They have nothing." Yet three months later, US bases in the region continue to be successfully attacked, US military equipment worth billions continues to be destroyed, and US servicemembers continue to be killed and injured.

This war was launched by President Trump without Congressional approval in February because the President believed that Iran, at 6,000 miles away, posed an existential threat to the United States. At the same time, he believed that the Iranian government was so weak that after a couple of days of bombing the political system would collapse and a "US-friendly" government could be installed in its place.

This makes no sense. How can a country be strong enough to threaten the United States but be so weak it is about to collapse?

Now, five months later, we continue to attack Iran to open a Hormuz Strait that was open before the war and to end a nuclear weapons program that does not exist. And the American middle and working classes are hit with a price tag for this senseless war that could exceed one trillion dollars.

That is why our Constitution requires that war be declared by the US Congress after extensive deliberation. The Framers wanted to safeguard the new country from the whims of a King George or other monarch who could take the country to war at will. The patriots fought for independence from exactly the political system we have in place today because they understood how destructive endless and foolish wars can be to a country.

The Framers also assumed that Members of the Legislative Branch of government would be of sufficiently good character that they would not allow an executive to abuse power in such a way. They were given all the tools they needed to prevent this, but today Congressmembers remain silent, unwilling to perform the duty required by their office. Most would rather not have the burden of declaring war because they are afraid that an unpopular war might hurt their re-election chances.

A recent poll featured in the Washington Post reveals that nearly seven in ten Americans disapprove of President Trump's handling of the Iran war. Along with the economy, the Iran war is the most important issue concerning the American people today.

Over the weekend President Trump announced that "we hit (Iran) very hard again...in honor of the three" servicemembers who were killed in recent days. But hitting Iran again does not honor the dead US servicemembers. It only guarantees that more Americans will follow them. If the President really wants to honor our military, he will declare an end to this pointless war, bring all of our troops home from the region, and announce that the destroyed US bases will not be rebuilt. It is time to end the American empire and come home.

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