

# KeizerOpinion

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## Threats are an unavoidable fact

By MICHAEL GERSON

Those who find “globalists” to be villains should attend to recent events in Congo. In the remote region of a remote country, government agencies and international institutions identified by sterile acronyms are working to prevent the spread of a disease that could result in the swift globalization of panic.

This week could well prove decisive in Congo’s current Ebola outbreak—which started in April and, at this writing, counts 40-some probable and confirmed cases. If the disease remains largely rural and grows by ones and twos, contact tracing and the use of an experimental vaccine are likely to remain on top of things. If there are outbursts in multiple parts of the city of Mbandaka—which counts more than 1 million people—or clusters are found downriver in Kinshasa, it will mean trouble.

The good news? The response to this outbreak, according to National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Francis Collins, is “vastly further along” than four years ago in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Last time, the World Health Organization (WHO) was slow, confused and ineffective. This time, teams from WHO and Doctors Without Borders were quickly on the scene. WHO’s new director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, visited the site of the outbreak within weeks. Stockpiles of the vaccine being deployed had already been prepositioned in Liberia and Mali, with the help of the global vaccine alliance GAVI. Congo’s health minister, Oly Ilunga Kalenga, has been in daily contact with Anthony Fauci’s staff at the NIH’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (When I talked to Fauci, Kalenga had contacted him 15 minutes before with a request). All involved knew this day would eventually come, and they have been preparing for it.

There are serious challenges in responding to a highly infectious disease in the rural Equateur province, parts of which can only be reached by helicopter. But medical authorities have some new tools, including the more aggressive use of experimental drugs. The vaccine rVSV-ZEBOV seemed dramatically effective during the West African outbreak four years ago, but circumstances did not allow

for a controlled trial. About 4,000 doses are now in Congo—with perhaps 3,000 more on the way—and health authorities are in the process of creating a cold chain of refrigeration to deliver the drugs where they are needed. They will be deployed in a strategy called “ring vaccination,” in which anyone who has been in contact with an Ebola victim, and anyone who has been in contact with those contacts, is vaccinated. There is also a second vaccine and a NIH-developed anti-viral treatment (which only appears to be helpful when administered within five days of becoming sick) that may be employed in Congo.

Congo has had eight outbreaks of Ebola before this one—each of them eventually defeated. A lot of good people, representing a number of global institutions, are working to ensure that the ninth ends the same way.

Like tremors before the “big one,” every defeated outbreak provides a frightening hint at what an epidemic might look like. The West African Ebola outbreak of 2014 took about 11,000 lives. If it had spread into the cities of Nigeria, the levels of death and global panic would have spiraled beyond control. But this is not even the worst prospect. A flu pandemic—with a strain that is easily transmitted and has a high mortality rate—could take tens of millions of lives.

When it comes to health, the world has become a single, massive body. A serious infection arriving at the weakest part of the immune system—say the health systems of West Africa—can easily spread to the whole. This argues for strengthening our health defenses—the ability to detect and respond to pandemic threats—in remote places. And it will require vaccines that can ring a disease and make a global immune response more effective. At NIH, Collins has been pushing hard for the development of a universal flu vaccine, which would be broadly protective against pandemic strains. Funding that effort could end up the most important spending in the entire budget.

The globalization of threats—from terrorism to pandemic disease—is a bare, unavoidable fact. And it will only be met and mastered by determined, heroic globalists.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

michael  
gerson



## So they were spying

By L. BRENT BOZELL III AND TIM GRAHAM

Months ago, the Old Media proclaimed that President Donald Trump was more than a bit nutty in insisting his campaign was the subject of surveillance by the Obama administration. Now it’s emerging that this wasn’t the slightest bit nutty. The New York Times reported — in a tone much like having its fingernails dragged across a chalkboard — that the FBI used an “informant” (not a “spy”) to chat up (and in one case, dangle money at) Trump staffers and investigate Russian finagling with the 2016 election.

As one might expect, since this is considered a “pro-Trump” narrative, it must be shot down, even as the facts are coming together. Writing in the Daily Beast, “conservative” CNN political commentator Matt Lewis warned that “there are tens of millions of Americans living in this alternative universe” who think this spying on “inexperienced and sketchy” Trump campaign aides was “nefarious.” “(Y)ou have to believe that the intelligence community is wholly corrupt and utterly politicized — that there was a conspiracy (at least, at the top) to stop Trump from becoming president,” he said. “(T)his requires a conspiratorial mind.”

That’s funny. Right after the election, that was the sour-grapes line from Team Clinton. A “vast right-

wing conspiracy” at the FBI under former Director James Comey conspired to stop Clinton from becoming president with his blundering announcements about her private email server. But that wasn’t considered nutty. That was what good Democrats believed. Once Trump fired Comey, the campaign conspiracy narrative switched sides.

Here’s what conservatives can declare to Matt Lewis: Our media are wholly corrupt and utterly politicized and were transparently dedicated to stopping Trump from becoming president. That’s not a kooky conspiracy theory. No one who witnessed their reporting in 2015 and 2016 should doubt it. It would not have been difficult for Team Obama to collude with them.

We would ask Lewis: Doesn’t pushing the idea that Trump colluded with the Russians require “a conspiratorial mind”? Is it fair to speculate endlessly on CNN and MSNBC about how special counsel Robert Mueller might prove collusion, when he hasn’t done so after a year of trying? The media don’t have to prove their Trump conspiracy theory to damage Trump’s political standing. It can keep that black cloud of speculation hanging over his head on every front page and every newscast.

Try this intellectual exercise: Imagine that the Justice Department under former President George W. Bush had

sent a spy/informant into the Obama campaign in 2008 to see whether foreign powers were attempting to influence its “inexperienced and sketchy” aides. Hundreds of media heads would have exploded.

Now we’re at a point where we should be asking what Obama’s top intelligence hacks, then-Director of National Intelligence James Clapper and then-CIA Director John Brennan, were cooking in 2016. But guess what. CNN hired Clapper, and NBC News hired Brennan. Now they are paid by the networks to tell the folks at home that Trump is nutty for insisting they did anything nefarious. Were Clapper and Brennan leaking anti-Trump dirt to the networks that have since hired them? Wouldn’t that look “wholly corrupt and utterly politicized”?

John Fund wrote in *National Review* that while in a greenroom of a network, he asked a journalist this question: Can’t the media spend time exploring why Team Obama sent a spy/informant into the opposing party’s campaign? “There’s only room for one narrative on all this,” the reporter replied. “And it’s all about Trump.” So much for following the facts wherever they lead instead of carefully curating facts against Trump.

Why must Matt Lewis and his media pals bemoan “two Americas”—one painted as soberly fact-based and the other destined for a rubber room—instead of considering both narratives?

(Creators Syndicate)

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## Is a constitutional crisis in our future?

It comes as a surprise to this writer that only two U.S. presidents have been impeached.

The first was Andrew Johnson who became president immediately after President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, and Bill Clinton, who ended his presidency having, after all, served two full terms. Regardless of its spare use, there is talk in the land now about another possible impeachment.

President Andrew Johnson was impeached by the House of Representatives on 11 articles of impeachment that detailed his “High crimes and misdemeanors” in accordance with Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Senate acquitted Johnson by one vote and he completed his term in office.

President Bill Clinton was impeached on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice by the House in 1998. Clinton’s impeachment trial was held in the Senate where he was acquitted of all charges in early 1999. The Whitewater scandal along with an Arkansas real estate deal that spun a tale possibly associated with the suicide of a White House lawyer, the firings of White House Travel Office personnel, and Clinton’s affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky delivered enough political and legal damage to bring his impeachment.

Here and now, President Donald Trump finds himself in the throes of several high-profile controversies that appear likely to bring serious trouble to him. What began as an investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election has evolved into an ever-enlarging, ready-to-erupt volcano of scandals involving an adult-film star, influence peddling, and, among other rumors, what Trump knew about allegations of sexual abuse by the New York attorney general.

What has President Trump done to fight for his survival? He’s out regularly on the campaign trail where he attacks Democrats but does not mention his problems while he implores his followers to support the

off-repeated witch hunt charge. He badgers Congress for more legislative triumphs than his one victory with the tax cut package while he brags about a stock market and employment gains over which he has no direct control. He keeps signing executive orders and presidential memoranda although few of them have survived to appear in the Federal Register.

Meanwhile, there are a number of Trump-related shortcomings that deeply trouble this writer. A few examples, from the many, include President Trump’s misguided efforts to sabotage health care coverage for millions of U.S. citizens, worsening the devastating effects of climate change, gutting clean air and water protections, giving tax cuts to billionaires and huge corporations, destabilizing statements and actions on the world stage, attacks on our news media, organizations and reporters, interference with the Russia investigation which involves

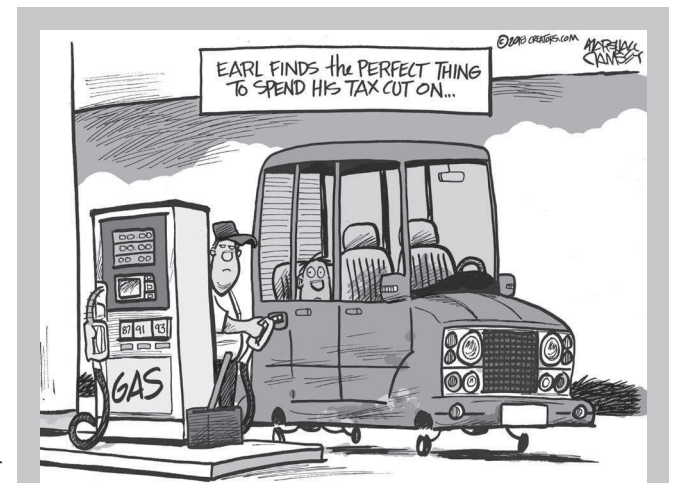
Russia’s attack on our democracy, self-serving efforts to cash-in on the presidency and thereby enhance his family’s wealth, disdain and contempt for the rule of

law, and so on.

Impeachment in the U.S. House could arrive from deliberations there by a newly-seated Democrat majority after the upcoming November election. However, given a U.S. House impeachment, conviction is unlikely to follow because the Democrats are unlikely to realize a two-thirds head count required for a conviction in the U.S. Senate. Even if there is a conviction, it’s believed Donald Trump will defy it as it is further believed he will defy all orders that precede it, including depositions, subpoenas, indictments or any other U.S. legal system maneuver.

Donald Trump has made it clear multiple times that he wants an unlimited term in office and made no bones about his admiration for other world leaders who possess life terms. Writer opinion: He will never leave the White House without being forced out and it’s plainly clear to see already that there are few members of Congress who have enough of what it would take to oust him. A constitutional crisis will predictably follow while it remains anyone’s guess, due to lack of a U.S. precedence, as to how that problematic condition will play itself out.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)



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