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Weekly Must-Reads in the Press, October 19, 2018

Here we are again with our weekly news update. We know that you are busy people, and you probably do have a lot of news to sift through, online, on social media, on news feeds. But we will bring you a weekly update of news we curate from major news sources that may be of interest to you. We may even be able to introduce you to some new news sources you will enjoy exploring.

So read these on your devices, or print them out for your morning coffee reading this weekend. (We do not expect you will read these all at once: this is slow news, not Facebook news. So explore, linger, and share with friends—we mean share the links with actual, physical, real friends!)

Last week we got some praise for our thoroughness. Here is a sample of responses:

1. “I need that emotional support squirrel” –Carol, DuPage County
2. “Oh. my. Gawd.... You really outdid yourself with this week’s M-R. Applebaum, Browning, Friedman, and Kagan, with the latter arguably the most frightening of all.... If Republicans win the 2020 election it genuinely is over.” –Martin, DuPage County
3. “YIKES!” –David, New York City
4. “I think I’ll just go cut my throat now.” –Chris, DuPage County

OK, so that went well for us. After last week’s gloom-and-doom issue, we thought to start this week with some good news locally (though we usually put local items at the end). And yes, squirrel video at #17. Oy, vey.

1. In local good news: *Politico* reports that, “**In the 14th District, which has been held by a Republican for most of the past 80 years**, Democrat challenger **Lauren Underwood** raised \$2 million in the third quarter. Most of those donations (74 percent) came from individuals giving \$200-plus, and \$397,366 (or 19 percent) came from donations under \$200. Republican incumbent **Randy Hultgren**, meanwhile, raised \$455,047. His campaign spent \$388,694 with 61 percent going to media, leaving him \$1.1 million on hand. Underwood spent \$1.1 million, with 56 percent going to advertising and 22

percent to staff. She had \$1.7 million left in the bank as of Sept. 30, when the quarter ended. [emphasis in original]

“In the 6th District, Republican incumbent Rep. Peter Roskam raised \$1.4 million to Democratic challenger Sean Casten’s \$2.7 million. Roskam’s filings show 44 percent came from PACs and 6 percent from small donors contributing \$200 or less. Roskam’s campaign spent \$1.9 million and had \$1.9 million on hand at quarter’s end. Casten’s \$2.7 million came from 79,000 individual donors. He spent \$2 million and has \$1.4 million going in to the Nov. 6 midterms.” [emphasis in original] <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/illinois-playbook/2018/10/16/q3-money-race-chance-the-rapper-zeros-in-on-cps-next-mayor-vallas-details-econ-plan-summer-out-327684>

2. In perhaps even better news, certainly for the 6th District, *The New York Times* has reported that “As they brace for losses in the House of Representatives, Republican Party leaders are racing to reinforce their candidates in about two-dozen districts, trying to create a barricade around their imperiled majority. They are pouring money and effort mainly into moderate suburban areas...that they see as critical to holding the chamber by even a one-seat margin. **And they have begun to pull millions of dollars away from Republican candidates who have fallen substantially behind in once-competitive races.... Party strategists said several other incumbents must recover quickly or risk losing funding, including Representatives Peter Roskam of Illinois and Mimi Walters of California, who represent white-collar suburbs near Chicago and Los Angeles, respectively.**” [emphasis added]

Can Republicans hold a narrow House majority by pouring money into conservative districts to hold the line? Perhaps. But already the paths to a red victory are getting narrower: “Representative Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico, who chairs the Democratic committee, said the landscape of competitive races was already too broad for Republicans to build an electoral firewall around a chosen few. ‘Many of these districts are closing our way,’ Mr. Luján said, adding: ‘There are many paths for us to get to a majority.’ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/11/us/politics/republican-house-races.html> [Irony of history: didn’t “red victory” once have something to do with Bolsheviks?—Ed.]

3. **More good news from polling aggregators:** *The Cook Political Report* has changed its ratings for a number of House Districts, including the IL 6th and 14th.

“IL-06: Roskam - Toss Up to Lean D ←

“IL-14: Hultgren - Lean R to Toss Up ←” [emphasis in original]

And for the first time, all three of *FiveThirtyEight*’s algorithms have the Roskam-Casten race as a “Toss-Up,” or **lean Dem**, with Casten close to a 50% chance of

winning in two modes, and at a 60% chance in the most comprehensive formula: <https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2018-midterm-election-forecast/house/illinois/6/#deluxe>

4. A. And on Oct. 8, *The Washington Post* reported on a new poll: **“Likely voters who live in 69 battleground House districts across the country narrowly prefer Democratic candidates, according to a new [Washington Post-Schar School survey](#), a potentially worrying sign for Republicans** given that the overwhelming percentage of these districts are currently in GOP hands. [emphasis added]

“With just a month to the midterm elections and with early voting set to begin in many states, the new poll highlights the challenge for Republicans as they seek to maintain their House majority at a time when President Trump’s approval rating remains below 50 percent despite sustained economic growth, low unemployment and a rising stock market.

“The survey of 2,672 likely voters by The Post and the Schar School at George Mason University shows that likely voters in these districts favor Democrats by a slight margin: 50 percent prefer the Democratic nominee and 46 percent prefer the Republican. By way of comparison, in 2016 these same districts favored Republican candidates over Democratic ones by 15 percentage points, 56 percent to 41 percent. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/survey-of-battleground-house-districts-shows-democrats-with-narrow-edge/2018/10/07/f45e13f2-c812-11e8-b1ed-1d2d65b86d0c_story.html

B. This general view is supported by a piece in the Oct. 12 *Atlantic* by Ronald Brownstein. He says, “Less than one month before Election Day, Democrats are strongly positioned to win at least 15, and perhaps more than 20, of Clinton-Republican seats [such as the IL 6th]. That alone would carry them close to the 23 they need to regain the House majority—even before contesting the other competitive, GOP-held seats in districts Trump won.

“The GOP’s ominous chances in the Clinton-Republican districts flow directly from Trump’s weak position in them. Rather than expanding his support in those places, Trump is facing growing doubts, according to recent polling, especially among college-educated white voters. Like a receding tide, this further erosion for Trump has left most of the Republicans in these seats standing naked on the beach.” Brownstein analyzes overall polling and mentions, among others, Peter Roskam as one of the vulnerables. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/10/trump-hurting-gop-key-suburban-districts/572749/>

5. Now a slight reality check: *The Post's* is just one poll, and the polls are close. **A new CBS News poll shows that voter turnout is the key.** Dems could lose the House by a single vote if turnout is low: “If the elections were held today, Democrats would stand to win 226 seats (more than the 218 needed for a majority) with Republicans winning the remaining 209. The margin of error on each of these estimates is plus or minus 14 seats, which means that there's still the prospect of Republicans retaining control. This range of possible outcomes in the model is wider than it was this summer. **Many key races are extremely close, and it wouldn't take much movement from where things stand now to swing many seats in either direction.**” [emphasis added]

CBS further finds: “Based on what we've learned from interviewing many different types of voters across the country, we ran two additional models using scenarios in which turnout ends up higher or lower than the model currently suggests, along with small shifts in key voting groups. The higher turnout scenario, in which low-propensity voters who tell us they are going to vote Democratic this year follow through and vote, sees Democrats winning 235 seats. **In the lower turnout scenario, new midterm voters stay home and the electorate profiles like it has in recent midterms. The Republicans win 218 seats under these conditions, narrowly retaining their majority, but without any seats to spare.**” [emphasis added] Again, this is just one poll, and polls can only tell us so much. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/democratic-lead-continues-to-grow-in-race-for-house-cbs-news-poll-battleground-tracker/>

6. A. **About polls:** It is perhaps worth mentioning that by all its formulas, *FiveThirtyEight* still has the odds of a Democratic win of the House at about 80%. <https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2018-midterm-election-forecast/house/#lite>

But here is an interesting view of polling from that master poll aggregator, *FiveThirtyEight's* Nate Silver. He sat down for an interview with *The Washington Post's* Margaret Sullivan. “Media understanding about probability, margin of error and uncertainty is very poor,” Silver said Monday afternoon when I stopped by the Manhattan office of his [FiveThirtyEight.com](https://www.fivethirtyeight.com) for a pre-election chat.

“That led them to be more surprised than they should have been,” he said, based on the quite accurate polling numbers [about the 2016 election] that were available.

“On the plus side, his final-days projections were better than most: He gave Hillary Clinton roughly a 7 in 10 chance of winning, with Trump at about 3 in 10. And he doesn't fault the polls, which were quite accurate, he said. ‘There are lots of reasons the outcome was surprising, but the polls were the least of it.’ [He has elsewhere noted that the predictions of the popular vote total were actually quite

close; but he acknowledged at the time that the state polls, especially in places like Pennsylvania, were poor. –Ed.]

“Midterm elections present their own predictive challenges: There’s a lot less data, fewer polls to analyze, in states and regions than in a national election. So while lots of people think they know exactly what’s going to happen — and are more than willing to hold forth as if they’re infallible — there’s still a lot of uncertainty, given the numbers.

“People should not be that surprised by a Democratic Senate or a Republican House,’ Silver told me. ‘We’re in dangerous territory from a predictive/assumption standpoint.’”

Why the possibilities above? Instruct your friends who think they know how things will go, that predictions of even 80% should not make them or anyone over-confident. Read this carefully, and don’t let the numbers scare you off: “[People say] that, for example, it’s “all but inevitable” that Democrats will win control of the House of Representatives or that there’s really no way Republicans will lose the Senate. Saying it’s all but inevitable should signal it’s at 98 percent, not 80 percent,’ which is [the reality at the moment](#), he said.

“While it’s quite probable — and has become slightly more likely — that we’ll see a split decision in Congress, there’s a solid chance it doesn’t go that way. **There’s actually a 40 percent chance that both houses of Congress will end up in the hands of one party, Silver said.** [emphasis added] [Following us here? –Ed.]

“That’s partly because, in each case, there’s about a 1-in-5 [20%] chance that the less likely outcome will happen: That Republicans will retain the House or that Democrats will win the Senate. (His 40 percent calculation takes into consideration that the House and Senate probabilities are not independent from each other; there’s almost no chance that Democrats will win the Senate but not the House.)”

B. In another *Washington Post* piece, Scott Clement reported that “Donald Trump’s 2016 election and other surprising election results around the world in recent years set off alarms about a crisis in election polling. But two massive studies come to the opposite conclusion: **Polls in recent elections are just about as accurate as they have been historically, if not a little better.**” [emphasis added]

“[Nate] Silver’s analysis focused on the performance of 2016 polls in particular, finding that national pre-election polls missed **the vote margin** between Trump

and Clinton by an average of 3.1 percentage points in 2016, lower than the 4.1-point average in elections since 1972.” [emphasis added]

The takeaway? Be careful how you use polling data, especially if it makes you so overconfident you don't encourage your friends and neighbors to get to the polls. It should be said, of course, that there is ample evidence for cautious optimism. But if we are wrong, it would be equally unfair to blame the polls. Read more of what Silver has to say here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/nate-silver-will-make-one-firm-prediction-about-the-midterms-most-journalists-wont-want-to-hear-it/2018/10/15/e66d9cc8-d0b3-11e8-b2d2-f397227b43f0_story.html. And here: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2018/06/01/the-sky-is-not-falling-two-major-studies-show-election-polls-are-not-getting-less-accurate/>.

[Note on how the media treats odds: local news outlets love to interview people at cash registers talking about how they will spend their Mega Millions huge jackpot payout. **The odds? 1 in 302,575,350.** Maybe you should be more worried about being bitten by a shark, at 1.3 million to 1. But do get your flu shot: your lifetime odds of dying from flu? 1 in 64. You can beat those odds, of course, by living here, far from the ocean. Or getting your flu shot! See the interesting chart [here](#). Better place to put your money: a single hand of 5-card poker: [odds of a royal flush](#)? 1 in 649,740.

The Washington Post reports [here](#) on the psychology used to sell lottery tickets: “State lottery commissions have relied on human psychology and the spirit of optimism to fuel sales. They discovered that when the jackpot grows to an absurdly high figure, even skeptical players will buy tickets — perhaps on a whim at a convenience store or by chipping in a few bucks in an office pool”.—*Ed.*]

7. Headline news! McConnell confirms he will be aiming to balance the tax-deficit hole in the budget with cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security. Oh, not exactly breaking news here? Well, in the “we-told-you-so” department, here is how economist and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman explains the scam clearly in Friday morning's *Times*. “When the Trump tax cut was on the verge of being enacted, I called it ‘the biggest tax scam in history,’ and [made a prediction](#): deficits would soar, and when they did, Republicans would once again pretend to care about debt and demand cuts in Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

“Sure enough, the deficit is soaring. **And this week [Mitch McConnell](#), the Senate majority leader, after declaring the surge in red ink ‘very disturbing,’ called for, you guessed it, cuts in ‘Medicare, Social Security and Medicaid.’** He also [suggested](#) that Republicans might repeal the Affordable Care Act —

taking away health care from tens of millions — if they do well in the midterm elections. [emphasis added]

“Any political analyst who didn’t see this coming should find a different profession....”

Krugman is shocked at the outrageous lies being used to justify the cries of “we’re going broke.” Of course federal spending goes up: it does all the time, as factors like inflation and population growth are accounted. But it was clearly and demonstrably the tax cut that fueled this deficit. And on top of this lie is the extraordinary double talk accompanying Republican claims that “entitlements” are to blame: “Consider the fact that even as McConnell blames ‘entitlements’ (that is, Medicare and Social Security) for deficits, and declares (falsely) that Medicare in particular is ‘unsustainable,’ Paul Ryan’s super PAC has been [running ads](#) accusing *Democrats* of wanting to cut Medicare. The cynicism is breathtaking.”

As Rachel Maddow would say, “Wow.” How can they get away with this nonsense? “The main answer,” Krugman says, “is obviously contempt for their own supporters, many of whom get their news from Fox and other propaganda outlets that slavishly follow the party line. And even in appeals to those supporters who rely on other sources, Republicans believe that they can neutralize the deep unpopularity of their actual policies by misrepresenting their positions, and win by playing to racism and fear.

“But let’s be clear: G.O.P. cynicism also involves a lot of contempt for the mainstream news media. Historically, media organizations have been remarkably unwilling to call out lies.... Even the most blatant falsehood tends to be reported with headlines about how ‘Democrats say’ it’s false, not that it’s actually false.”

Summary: freedom is slavery; war is peace; ignorance is strength. Read Krugman’s column here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/18/opinion/taxes-medicare-social-security-midterms.html>. **Highly recommended reading*

8. Back to Good News: Canada legalizes marijuana use nationally! Plan your next vacation. Here is the usually staid *Toronto Globe and Mail*: “And so, here we go. The recreational use of cannabis is now legal in Canada, making ours only the second country, after tiny Uruguay, to take a leap that is both epic and overblown.

“Overblown because, in one critical way, nothing will change. According to Statistics Canada, 4.9 million of us consumed \$5.7-billion worth of cannabis in various forms, both medical and non-medical, in 2017. Canadians don’t need a

change in the law to be encouraged to use pot. All that Oct. 17 will be for many adult users is the day they alter the way they procure and enjoy a relatively safe narcotic that may have been a part of their lives for years.

“Instead of exclusively relying on an illegal dealer, they will have the option to buy legal weed produced by licensed manufacturers from either a government-owned retailer or a licensed private retailer.

“It is long past due that a regime that punished vulnerable people for so small a crime, while millions of others brazenly used cannabis with impunity, is finally off the books. [emphasis added]

“There will also be economic and political consequences. By becoming the first major Western country to legalize cannabis and allow its undocumented use (in Uruguay, users must provide their fingerprints in order to buy pot), Canada has positioned itself to be the leader in an industry that seems destined to grow internationally.” Try to imagine that editorial appearing some day in a US newspaper! <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/editorials/article-globe-editorial-with-legal-pot-canada-sets-an-example-for-other/>

The New York Times does clarify some of the rules: “In some provinces, weed will be legally sold only in government stores; in others, only in private stores; and in others there will be a mix. No bar or restaurant will be able to sell marijuana, at least not at first. Ontario, Canada’s most-populous province, will have privately run stores starting on April 1. Until then, cannabis will be available legally only online, from a government-run site.” There will *not* be pot cafes, as in Amsterdam: “Like drinking alcohol and smoking tobacco, the smoking of marijuana in public places will be circumscribed, depending on the province.” And, **Caution:** US citizens, even those going to states where marijuana use is legal, *cannot bring marijuana into the US*. No doubt customs will be on the lookout. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/16/world/canada/marijuana-legalization-explainer.html>

9. Speaking of the US border, our next stories are...bad news. Sorry. But here we go again.

A. On Thursday afternoon, CNN broke a story about a blow-up in the White House between John Bolton and John Kelly. **“A heated argument in the West Wing between chief of staff John Kelly and national security adviser John Bolton over a recent surge in border crossings turned into a shouting match Thursday, two sources familiar with the argument told CNN. [emphasis added]**

“The exchange lay bare a bitter disagreement that has existed between two of President Donald Trump's top aides for weeks now. Trump, who was incensed about the rising levels of migrants and threatened to shut down the southern border on Twitter earlier that morning, took Bolton's side during the argument. Bolton favors a harder line approach to the issue and criticized Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen during the argument, a source said.” CNN reports this argument this may lead to one man’s resignation, presumably Kelly’s. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/18/politics/john-kelly-john-bolton-immigration/index.html>

B. On Thursday, Trump had ranted about a new caravan of perhaps 3000 people travelling from Honduras to Mexico in hopes of seeking asylum either in Mexico or the US. This was the immediate cause of the blowup reported above. As *The Washington Post* reported, “President Trump threatened Thursday to summon the military to close the U.S.-Mexico border and upend a trade deal, expressing mounting frustration with a large caravan of migrants from Honduras making its way toward the United States.

“In morning tweets, Trump repeated vows to stop U.S. aid to Central American countries that do not disband the caravan and issued a fresh threat to the Mexican government, which said Wednesday that it would treat those in the caravan no differently than it does other migrants.

“In addition to stopping all payments to these countries, which seem to have almost no control over their population, I must, in the strongest of terms, ask Mexico to stop this onslaught — and if unable to do so I will call up the U.S. Military and CLOSE OUR SOUTHERN BORDER!” Trump said in one tweet. In another, he suggested that the ‘onslaught’ of immigrants could undermine a recently announced reworked trade deal with Mexico and Canada, writing that immigration is ‘far more important to me, as President, than Trade.’”

Of course, cutting off aid to Central American countries will only make the situation worse: “Since taking office, the Trump administration has reduced aid to Central America, and that has drawn criticism from leaders in the region. [Honduran President Juan Orlando] Hernández told Reuters last month that reduced aid ‘will obviously have repercussions,’ including more immigration, because previous efforts were intended to ‘attack the migration problem at its root.’”

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-threatens-to-summon-military-to-close-us-mexico-border-in-response-to-migrant-caravan/2018/10/18/d427b1dc-d2bd-11e8-83d6-291fced2ab1_story.html

C. As is often the case, *The Guardian* has had the most thorough reporting on the migrant issue, though as the caravan approaches, the story will no doubt grow in the US press. The paper said on Thursday, “The Mexican government has warned that anyone entering in an ‘irregular manner’ – without a passport and visa – faces detention and deportation, and on Wednesday, 500 federal officers including riot police were deployed to the border city of Tapachula, where the migrants will start arriving on Thursday. It was not clear if the troops would stop the migrants crossing or merely observe them enter, as Guatemalan police did when the caravan left Honduras....

“Trump has portrayed the caravan of migrants, which includes many families traveling with children and fleeing poverty or gang violence, as a threat to the United States. It would take several weeks for the group to travel to the US border. Trump made a similar threat to cut off aid to Honduras over another caravan of migrants in the spring, which was never carried out....

“I am watching the Democrat Party led (because they want Open Borders and existing weak laws) assault on our country by Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, whose leaders are doing little to stop this large flow of people, INCLUDING MANY CRIMINALS, from entering Mexico to U.S.,” Trump tweeted on Thursday. No evidence has emerged of criminal affiliations among the members of the caravan, who have mostly told reporters they are fleeing gang violence and poverty, and are traveling as a group for protection from criminals who target migrants for robbery, rape and kidnap.” The paper also says that it would be difficult to “close the border,” whatever that may mean. *The Guardian* also points out that increased enforcement of migrating groups actually began under the Obama administration, though the sheer numbers arriving and detained has skyrocketed under Trump. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/oct/18/trump-threatens-to-close-us-mexico-border-over-migrant-caravan>

10. Meanwhile *The Associated Press* reported in a detailed study that some of the children separated from their parents at the border may be adopted by American families by order of state courts. As *The Hill* summarized the report on Oct. 8, “Holes in immigration laws are allowing state court judges to grant custody of migrant children to American families without notifying their deported parents, [the Associated Press reported](#) Tuesday. The AP scoured hundreds of court documents and immigration records to reveal several cases of children being permanently, legally taken from their families after initial separations.”

The AP followed an older case, from the Obama administration, but one that has frightening consequences for children now in foster care all over the US. “The case study presented is indicative of larger loopholes in the immigration system,

the AP contends. Because state governments tend to run child-welfare systems, inconsistencies between federal law and its application at the state level are frequent. AP's conclusions are especially important given that 300 parents were deported to Central America without their children just this summer as part of the Trump administration's 'zero tolerance' policy at the border." <https://thehill.com/policy/international/americas/410653-ap-migrant-children-may-be-adopted-after-parents-are-deported>

Note: the CNN report of the Bolton-Kelly blowup, [above](#), says, "The caravan issue has been the subject of several White House meetings in recent days, according to an administration official. **The conversations have centered around not only how to stop the caravan, but also how to use the issue for the upcoming midterms, the official said.** [emphasis added] Stephen Miller [an extreme immigration hardliner [with ties to white-nationalist groups](#)] has been heavily involved."

11. We report here, following on the above, a long-form feature report from *The Guardian* on Thursday detailing **a nationwide crackdown on undocumented immigrants of all sorts, in homes and workplaces by ICE.** "ICE agents show up announced at workplaces, doorsteps and courthouses, ready to arrest anyone without legal papers and send them through the agency's detention centers and back to the country they came from...."

"Five days after taking office, Trump signed an executive order that effectively stopped ICE from prioritizing criminals for deportation. Instead, they are now [going after](#) all the estimated [11.3 million undocumented immigrants in the US](#) at once – drawing little distinction between hardened criminals and productive community members who have started businesses, bought homes and paid their taxes.

"This includes a 10-year-old with cerebral palsy [Ice arrested in October 2017](#) after she left a Texas hospital for treatment; [undocumented adults](#) who volunteer to take custody of children who crossed the border by themselves; [and an elderly couple](#) visiting their pregnant daughter-in-law and her husband at a military base in New York for the Fourth of July holiday.

"The idea is to try to send the message to communities that everybody is at risk of deportation by arresting all sorts of people who are no kind of threat and who very well may be productive members of their communities with US citizen family members and people who rely on them and all that sort of thing,' said Omar Jadwat, director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project...."

“From January to October 2017, Ice arrested 37,670 people who had no criminal convictions, [according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse \(Trac\)](#) a non-profit, non-partisan data center at Syracuse University. That’s a 125% increase from the year before, when ICE arrested 16,673 people with no criminal convictions, according to Trac data published last month....

“In June, ICE arrested Pablo Villavicencio, a pizza delivery man in New York City, when he arrived with a bulk lunch order at Fort Hamilton army base. [The father of two, who had applied for a green card before arrest](#), was fast-tracked for deportation but the government dropped the case last week after it received international media attention. ‘What they would like to do is deport people and skip the whole legal process, right?’ said the ACLU’s Jadwat. ‘That was the idea initially behind this and I think their legal position is still they can sweep these people up and put them on a plane and they’re gone before you know it. It’s only because we and other lawyers have stepped up and said you have to provide some due process before you ship someone to a place where their lives could be in danger that they haven’t been able to kind of send people abroad immediately.’” *The Guardian* also offers some frightening stories of individuals caught up in the raids, some of whom have lived and worked here for decades. Lawsuits are pending. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/oct/18/immigration-ice-deportation-undocumented-trump> **Highly recommended reading*

12. We reference here a story from June, when the American Academy of Pediatrics spoke out on the issue of family separation. Here is a summary from *The Hill* on June 18: **“The president of the American Academy of Pediatrics on Monday said President Trump’s ‘zero tolerance’ policy separating families at the U.S.-Mexico border ‘amounts to child abuse.’** [emphasis added]

“Dr. Colleen Kraft in an appearance on CNN described the many ways Trump’s policy emotionally harms children and laid out in detail what she witnessed when she toured an immigration detention center. ‘I can’t describe to you the room I was in with the toddlers,’ Kraft said. ‘Normally toddlers are rambunctious and running around. We had one child just screaming and crying, and the others were really silent. And this is not normal activity or brain development with these children.’ Kraft added that the emotional strain the children in these facilities are under produces a condition called ‘toxic stress’ and that it inhibits the development of their brains.

“‘It disrupts their brain architecture and keeps them from developing language and social, emotional bonds, and gross motor skills, and the development that they could possibly have,’ she said.” <https://thehill.com/latino/392790-american-academy-of-pediatrics-president-trumps-family-separation-policy-is-child>

The AAP had concluded, “**Studies of detained immigrants have shown that children and parents may suffer negative physical and emotional symptoms from detention, including anxiety, depression and posttraumatic stress disorder. Conditions in U.S. detention facilities, which include forcing children to sleep on cement floors, open toilets, constant light exposure, insufficient food and water, no bathing facilities, and extremely cold temperatures, are traumatizing for children. No child should ever have to endure these conditions.**” [emphasis added] You can read the AAP letter on this subject here: <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/AAP-Statement-on-Executive-Order-on-Family-Separation.aspx> **Highly recommended reading*

13. Ah, nothing refreshes and invigorates the progressive mind like **talk of impeachment**. So let’s get right to it. An interesting article on this appeared in the Sunday *New York Times*. Its correspondent, Peter Baker, is the chief White House correspondent for The Times and an author, with Jon Meacham, Timothy Naftali and Jeffrey A. Engel, of “Impeachment: An American History.”

Baker’s analysis is titled, “**Is Trump on a Collision Course With Impeachment?** Democrats are largely ducking the topic on the campaign trail, but few people in Washington doubt that it will be on the table if they win the House.”

Baker discusses the history of impeachment, and of course warns us that the divisive process has never resulted in a president’s removal from office: “While Democrats are largely ducking the topic on the campaign trail, few in Washington doubt that impeachment will be on the table if they win the House on Nov. 6. If that happens, anyone who thought the battle over Justice Kavanaugh’s confirmation was ugly and divisive should buckle up, because history suggests it would provide only a small taste of what lies ahead. The impeachment drives against Andrew Johnson, Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton tore at the nation’s fabric, but an effort to remove Mr. Trump could lead to an even more incendiary conflict, thanks to the advent of social media and Mr. Trump’s brand of blowtorch politics....

“In Iowa, he laid out what would undoubtedly be his public argument. ‘You get impeached for having created the greatest economy in the history of our country,’ he said. ‘The best job numbers in the history of our country, just about, right? The greatest trade deals, which we’ve just finished, in the history of our country.’

“Putting aside the hyperbole about the economy and jobs numbers, which are both strong but hardly the best ever, Mr. Trump has a certain advantage going

into any impeachment fight. **The history of presidential impeachments shows that they are started by the opposition party but are never successful unless the president's party buys into the effort.** [emphasis added]

“In Mr. Trump’s case, a Democratic House might impeach him, but even if Democrats take the Senate, they would still be far from the two-thirds necessary for conviction, meaning that 15 or more Republicans would have to go along. Such a scenario seems unlikely unless the special counsel, Robert Mueller, produces a report with such damning information that it transforms the current political dynamics.”

Then, as Baker says, there is the matter of the definition of high crimes and misdemeanors. The founders, he points out, “started out by authorizing impeachment in cases of treason or bribery, but George Mason found that too limiting and suggested adding ‘maladministration.’ James Madison pushed back, worried that would make a president too beholden to Congress. Removing a bad president is what elections were for. Mason backed off and proposed instead ‘or other high crimes and misdemeanors,’ which was readily accepted. The Constitution included no further explanation, but in their discussions the framers made clear they had in mind any president who would employ his office for personal profit, ‘betray his trust to foreign powers’ or injure society itself, among other possible offenses.”

More apt for our current discussion of obstruction: “Intriguingly, the framers anticipated the possibility that a president might try to use his power to thwart investigations into his actions. [emphasis added] During the [Virginia ratification debate](#), Mason asked what would happen if a president chose to ‘pardon crimes which were advised by himself’ or to ‘stop inquiry and prevent detection’ of a crime he or an associate had committed? Madison responded that ‘the House of Representatives can impeach him; they can remove him if found guilty.’...

“The elected Democratic leadership has been reluctant to talk about it, out of worries of a public backlash or playing into Mr. Trump’s hands. **A failed impeachment could energize his base and even propel him to re-election in 2020....** [emphasis added] But it is hard to imagine Democrats not going there if they take the House, given the enormous pressure from their liberal base to at least open an impeachment inquiry. Three-quarters of Democrats told pollsters that they want Mr. Trump impeached.” Read this helpful historical perspective here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/13/sunday-review/is-trump-on-a-collision-course-with-impeachment.html>. **Highly recommended reading*

14. So, how did Elizabeth Warren's DNA test showing her Native American ancestry go for her? Well, some on the left applauded her for standing up to Trump. For example, Joan Walsh in *The Nation* said on Monday, "What matters today, on the eve of these all-important midterms, is that Warren is showing Democrats—and the media—that she knows how to fight. She won't let Trump define her as either a faux Native American, an Ivy League elitist, or a liar." <https://www.thenation.com/article/elizabeth-warren-will-not-let-donald-trump-define-her/>

But as time went on, reactions became more mixed. *Politico* headlined on Tuesday, "**Warren stumbles with 'Native American' rollout.**" "Sen. Elizabeth Warren's effort to defuse the Donald Trump-fueled controversy over her past claims of Native American ancestry seems to have done just the opposite," says the website.

"Twenty-four hours later, outrage on the left and right was still running strong, as questions swirled about the likely 2020 candidate's timing and political judgment. Several Democrats expressed frustration that Warren (D-Mass.) would choose to create a media sideshow so close to the important 2018 midterms. And some progressives and Native Americans fumed that Warren appeared to be appropriating tribal identity to settle a political controversy.

"Far from clearing Warren's path to a post-midterm presidential campaign launch, as it seemed designed to achieve, Warren's elaborate rollout on Monday — complete with DNA test results, a slick video and an attempt to go toe-to-toe with the tweeter-in-chief on his own ground — seems to have created as many headaches for her as it alleviated. Some Democrats privately compared the situation to Hillary Clinton's never-ending email debacle." *Politico* notes that the Cherokee nation reacted with fury: "[u]sing a DNA test to lay claim to any connection to the Cherokee Nation or any tribal nation, even vaguely, is inappropriate and wrong." Cherokee Nation Secretary of State Chuck Hoskin Jr. went on to say that Warren's move 'makes a mockery out of DNA tests and its legitimate uses while also dishonoring legitimate tribal governments and their citizens.'" Warren responded that she never meant to suggest that she was actually a member of the tribe, which exclusively determines tribal affiliation. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/10/16/warren-dna-native-american-905705>

15. **And how is that Brexit deal going for you, Great Britain?** We turn now to the news that negotiations this week between Theresa May and the EU continue to go badly. We point this out not to let our readers here indulge in Schadenfreude because clearly things are going even worse for the Brits economically than for us. No, we mention this because the disaster of Brexit

points to the perils of nativism, and of the whole international movement of which Trump is a part.

The best essay for Americans to read to make sense of what is happening comes from one of *The Nation's* British columnists, Gary Younge (who also writes for *The Guardian*). He begins, “‘There are two kinds of European nations,’ said Kristian Jensen, the Danish finance minister, last year. ‘There are small nations, and there are countries that have not yet realized they are small nations.’ With Brexit, it’s become painfully obvious that the United Kingdom is among the latter.

“In their melancholic yearning for a time long past, those who ran the campaign to leave the European Union had a vision of us marching out, suited and booted, bowler hat on head, umbrella in hand, striding proudly backward into a past of glorious independence. As time goes on, a far more likely scenario is that Britain will be unceremoniously ejected from the EU with its pants down and land flat on its behind. [emphasis added] The concern had once been that Britain would get a bad deal; now there’s a growing possibility that it could leave with no deal at all—a state of affairs that would come about more by poor judgment than bad luck....

“In July, May got her cabinet to agree to proposals whereby the UK would selectively heed some aspects of the European single market (like the tariff-free trade in services) and not others (like the free movement of labor). Not only was the EU never going to accept this, but a significant part of May’s own party was against it. [emphasis added] Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, who consented to the plan before resigning in opposition to it, described it as ‘polishing a turd.’ He had a point. But as one of the leading Brexiters, it was his turd, and the least he could do was clean up after himself.

“What turned out to be really shocking, though, was the vehemence with which the EU’s negotiators and heads of state—a group more likely to parse adjectives and convolute in tortuous communiqués—responded. French President Emmanuel Macron said in September, ‘Those who explain that we can easily live without Europe, that everything is going to be all right, and that it’s going to bring a lot of money home, are liars.’”

The nativists and xenophobes lied about the great economic benefits of closing the country off from its biggest trading partner. Sound familiar? As Conservatives quarrel in Britain about what they can accept, there are fears that there may be no deal at all. What would that mean? Younge explains, “In the absence of any deal, the health-insurance cards that allow British tourists free health care in the EU would be invalid; a hard border between the north and south of Ireland would need to be erected, throwing a key element of the peace process into question;

and contracts with EU companies could be subject to renegotiation, as the UK would become a 'third country' overnight. With the possibility of gridlocked ports (goods that were once imported freely would now be more thoroughly checked) and airports (World Trade Organization rules do not cover aviation, and no aircraft is permitted to fly between EU and UK airports without a bilateral agreement), there is talk of stockpiling food and medicine." <https://www.thenation.com/article/a-small-nation-that-thinks-its-a-world-power/> *Highly recommended reading

Oh, and who is helping unite the US and Britain in the war to keep our populations pure and our borders secure? It seems our very own Steve Bannon has been sent over there on Lend-Lease. As the UK *Express* reported in July, "Boris Johnson, the former Foreign Secretary has been described as 'very impressive' by former Trump advisor Steve Bannon as he called on him to be bold and offer an alternative to Theresa May and her soft Brexit plan.

"Mr Bannon told Nigel Farage on his LBC show: 'I have known Boris over the last year and I've always been very impressed with Boris.'" And Bannon compared Boris to...Churchill. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/989115/Brexit-news-latest-Boris-Johnson-Sтивен-Bannon-LBC-Nigel-Farage-May-leadership-contest>

15. A note on Bannon: In July the UK's *Independent* newspaper reported that "[Ukip](#) [the extremist UK nationalist party] has pledged to work with Steve Bannon's new European alt-right movement, forging what critics have branded an 'unholy alliance' to bring down the EU and fuel populism across the continent.

"Mr Bannon, a former investment banker who founded the website Breitbart, has pledged to bolster the continent's far right with a new foundation called The Movement that would dole out resources to eurosceptics and anti-EU populists. The former chief strategist of [Donald Trump](#) has rattled Brussels after stating his intention to create a 'supergroup' in the European parliament after next year's EU elections, with extreme right-wingers taking as many as a third of the legislature's seats." <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/steve-bannon-movement-ukip-brexit-a8464846.html>

This UK connection was reported back in 2017 in an excellent profile of Bannon in *Politico*. They detail his hatred of the EU and his campaigns to destroy it. At one point, of course, there was panic in European capitals that Bannon had Trump's ear. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/03/trump-steve-bannon-destroy-eu-european-union-214889> *Hands across the water!*

17. OK, OK. Here is our cute squirrel video for the week. You asked for it. Here, from *World's Funniest Videos*, is "**10 Funniest Squirrel Videos.**" That ought to

get you through the week. Next week, though: cat videos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4yikpWtIFU8>.

Best wishes, and Peace,
Mark
The Indivisible DuPage Research Team

***“Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number—
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few”***

—From "The Mask of Anarchy. Written on the Occasion of the [army] Massacre at Manchester [1819]", By British Romantic Poet Percy Shelley