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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!)

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### BREAKING NEWS: BOLTON APPOINTED NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR TO REPLACE MCMASTER

We reprint below portions of the story we covered just last week. We advise our readers to read the articles below carefully to assess the great danger posed by this appointment.

But first, for a report just yesterday on the Bolton appointment, see *The Huffington Post* for March 22: "Trump's Next National Security Adviser, John Bolton, Is As Dangerous As You Remembered." [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/john-bolton-foreign-policy-history\\_us\\_5aaa8f31e4b045cd0a6f7926](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/john-bolton-foreign-policy-history_us_5aaa8f31e4b045cd0a6f7926).

*The New York Times* reported on Thursday evening that "Democrats greeted the news about Mr. Bolton with deep alarm. 'The person who will be first in first out of the Oval Office on national security matters passionately believes the U.S. should launch pre-emptive war against both Iran and North Korea with no authorization from Congress,' said Senator

Chris Murphy of Connecticut. 'My God.'" Full report here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/22/us/politics/hr-mcmaster-trump-bolton.html>.

This morning *The Times* editorializes: "There are few people more likely than Mr. Bolton is to lead the country into war. His selection is a decision that is as alarming as any Mr. Trump has made so far." <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/23/opinion/john-bolton-trump-national-security-adviser.html>.

Our earlier reports, from March 16, follow:

This is both very very important and very very bad .... Here is how *Vanity Fair* reported on Wednesday [March 3]: "Last Tuesday, Trump met with ultra-hawkish former U.N. ambassador **John Bolton** in the Oval Office to discuss a potential job offer. Bolton has for years argued that the United States should pre-emptively attack Tehran. In 2015, he [wrote](#) a *New York Times* op-ed headlined, 'To Stop Iran's Bomb, Bomb Iran,' and last month, he [wrote](#) a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed outlining the legal case for a pre-emptive strike against North Korea. According to a person who spoke with Bolton after the meeting, Bolton recalled that Trump said he wanted him to join the administration: 'We need you in here, John.' Bolton responded that there were only two jobs he'd consider: secretary of state and national security adviser. Trump said, 'O.K, I'll call you really soon.' Sources added that Trump spent much of the time with Bolton fuming that McMaster was speaking privately with **Barack Obama's** former national security adviser **Susan Rice**. 'Trump kept saying, "Can you believe it? To Susan Rice? Can you believe it?'"' [emphasis in original]. <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2018/03/trump-swinging-the-axe-at-tillerson-mcmaster-sessions-jared-and-ivanka>.

For those who do not know the name, *Vox* on Monday published a profile: "John Bolton, former ambassador to the United Nations in the Bush administration, is one of the most radically hawkish voices in the American foreign policy conversation. He has said the United States should declare war on both [North Korea](#) and [Iran](#). He was credibly accused of [manipulating US intelligence](#) on weapons of mass destruction prior to the Iraq war and of [abusive treatment](#) of his subordinates. He once 'joked' about [knocking 10 stories](#) off the UN building in New York. And now he

seems poised to become President Donald Trump's next national security adviser, which would have significant — and frightening — implications for the future of Trump's foreign policy.... John Prados, a fellow at George Washington University's National Security Archives, came to an even broader conclusion in a study of [declassified Bush administration documents](#): Bolton bears a significant amount of blame for the politicized intelligence used to justify the decision to attack Iraq." Bolton has also advocated preemptive war on North Korea. He has aligned himself with anti-Muslim groups and extremist Robert Spencer and has spoken to groups claiming Islamic law was creeping into the US legal system. He advocates for Jordan to annex the West Bank and the tearing up of the Iran deal. He appears frequently on *Fox News*. Read the *Vox* piece here: <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/3/12/17091772/john-bolton-trump-national-security-adviser-war-iran-north-korea>. *\*Highly recommended reading.*

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**1. Can it happen here? Has it happened here? Can Trump be impeached?** "Yes," "Yes," and "Not likely." These are the rather grim answers of conservative / libertarian writer Andrew Sullivan, in a long *New York Times Book Review* review essay of two books, [Impeachment: A Citizen's Guide](#), by Cass R. Sunstein; and [Can it Happen Here?: Authoritarianism in America](#), edited by Cass R. Sunstein. For Sullivan, it will be very hard to reach the level of criminality necessary to impeach a president, and that is how the Founders designed it to work: "[I]f he was to start acting like an idiot, he could not be impeached. If he was psychologically disturbed but not mentally incapacitated, ditto. If he pursued ruinous policies, or faced enormous unpopularity, or said unspeakably reckless things, he could not be impeached. If he committed a whole slew of crimes in his personal capacity, he'd be answerable to public opinion and regular justice, but not subject to losing his job. If his judgment was unstable, his personal behavior appalling or if he were to make the United States a laughingstock in the opinion of mankind, the impeachment provision did not apply."

Given this, Sullivan argues that from what Sunstein has written in his book, Trump is not likely to be impeached. Even if Mueller does come up with

what Sunstein believes are impeachable offenses, a Republican Congress almost certainly will not act: “[I]mpeachment remains a political decision. Which means that unless we experience some kind of unprecedented sea change in the pathological tribalism that now defines our politics, impeachment is a dead letter. What makes Trump immune is that he is not a president within the context of a healthy republican government. He is a cult leader of a movement that has taken over a political party — and he specifically campaigned on a platform of one-man rule.”

Sullivan sees the latter as the message of Sunstein’s edited book, and **for Sullivan, authoritarianism has already happened.** "The ... likely model for American authoritarianism is that of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey or the Fidesz party in Hungary. The dismemberment of a public discourse centered on objective truth is a key first step, fomented by unceasing dissemination of outright lies from the very top, metabolized by tribal social media, ever more extreme talk radio and what is essentially a state propaganda channel, Fox News. The neutering of the courts is the second step — and Trump is well on his way to (constitutionally) establishing a federal judiciary whose most important feature will be reliable assent to executive power. Congress itself has far less approval than Trump; its inability to do anything but further bankrupt the country, enrich the oligarchy and sabotage many Americans’ health care leaves an aching void filled by ... a president who repeatedly insists that 'I am the only one who matters.'" <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/12/books/review/impeachment-cass-sunstein-can-it-happen-here.html>. *\*Highly recommended reading.*

**"Not so fast," argues David Cole**, national legal director of the ACLU, in the March 6 online issue of *The Nation*. "Trump certainly talks like an authoritarian and walks like an authoritarian. But at least thus far, he has not been able to *rule* like an authoritarian. That’s because his initiatives have met with resistance from the people, the states, and the courts— though, conspicuously, not from the Republican Party. Despite enjoying single-party control of both houses of Congress, Trump has succeeded in passing only one major piece of legislation, his tax reform bill, following multiple failures to repeal Obamacare. His administration is most often consumed by its own infighting and scandals. Much of what he has implemented has been via unilateral executive action, and can be reversed

if and when a new president takes office. All in all, he has been a most incompetent authoritarian.”

Cole suggests that while Trump’s election may head us down the road toward one-man rule, much depends on what kind of resistance he meets in civil society. “Trump’s victory was extraordinarily unlikely. All the pollsters predicted Hillary Clinton would win. She actually did win the popular count, by nearly 3 million votes. Trump prevailed only because of the perverse Electoral College system, which gives disproportionate weight to the less populous states and to rural areas. Trump was not the recipient of a vast new wave of conservative votes. He received a smaller proportion of the popular vote than Mitt Romney four years earlier, and only 0.4 percent more than John McCain received in 2008. But Hillary Clinton received only 48.2 percent of the popular vote, compared to Obama’s 52.9 percent in 2008 and 51.1 percent in 2012. The Republicans did not so much win the election as the Democrats, by not turning out, lost it.” For Cole, “we have the resources to resist, and if we choose to deploy them, we can succeed not just in forestalling the forces of populist authoritarianism but in reinforcing constitutional democracy and building a progressive majority.” Read his careful analysis of how and why authoritarian societies develop, and why we are still a long way off, here: <https://www.thenation.com/article/could-it-happen-here-donald-trump-tony-judt-and-the-future-of-american-democracy/>. [Note: *The Nation* is America’s weekly progressive magazine. It may limit your monthly reads. You may avoid this block by using multiple devices. But we advise our readers just to subscribe.] *\*Highly recommended reading.*

2. The **Andrew McCabe firing** is hot news, but it remains confusing and as-yet unclear in its details. What is clear is that McCabe has evidence that he gave to the Mueller investigation, and that the firing is almost certainly an attempt to neutralize him and damage his credibility. Ostensibly, McCabe was fired for somehow misrepresenting his role in an internal investigation concerning the release of information about the Clinton email investigation. But what exactly he was accused of has not been clarified. As *The New York Times* explained on Wednesday, "For months, Mr. Trump personally attacked Mr. McCabe, a 21-year veteran of the F.B.I. and former deputy director. Mr. McCabe briefly served in the top role after Mr. Trump fired James B. Comey, the president’s first F.B.I. director. [Mr. McCabe was](#)

[fired](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/21/us/politics/trump-mueller-russia.html) on the eve of his retirement, which puts his government pension in jeopardy. After the firing, it was disclosed that Mr. McCabe kept memos on Mr. Trump, which Mr. Mueller's investigators can access." <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/21/us/politics/trump-mueller-russia.html>.

We encourage you to read McCabe's own statement reprinted in *The Huffington Post*, which reads, in part, "[this] attack on my credibility is one part of a larger effort not just to slander me personally, but to taint the FBI, law enforcement, and intelligence professionals more generally. It is part of this Administration's ongoing war on the FBI and the efforts of the Special Counsel investigation, which continue to this day. Their persistence in this campaign only highlights the importance of the Special Counsel's work. I have always prided myself on serving my country with distinction and integrity, and I always encouraged those around me to do the same. Just ask them. To have my career end in this way, and to be accused of lacking candor when at worst I was distracted in the midst of chaotic events, is incredibly disappointing and unfair. But it will not erase the important work I was privileged to be a part of, the results of which will in the end be revealed for the country to see." [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/andrew-mccabe-firing-response\\_us\\_5aac79dae4b0337adf83e00a](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/andrew-mccabe-firing-response_us_5aac79dae4b0337adf83e00a).

And for a fuller interview with McCabe, about his firing, see the details here, in *The Huffington Post* for March 16. McCabe tells them, of the Inspector General's report, "I don't know if anyone from the White House or within the Department influenced the IG," McCabe said. 'It's a striking coincidence. One that can't be seen outside the context of the president's own public communications.' The inspector general's report has yet to be released, but McCabe was feeling its black mark on his future even before his firing. When it finally does come out, he predicted, it will attempt to bolster the claim by Trump allies that previous FBI leadership 'was corrupt, was politically biased, politically motivated,' McCabe added. But, he said, 'I think most people will be like, "Really?"'" <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/16/mccabe-fired-fbi-justice-retirement-468647>.

For those who wish to understand more about what is at stake here, read *The New York Times* summary, titled, "Andrew McCabe, Fired F.B.I. Deputy, Is Said to Have Kept Memos on Trump": <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/17/us/politics/andrew-mccabe-fbi-memos->

[trump.html](#).

3. In an unprecedented series of remarks, **former law-enforcement officials lashed out at Trump** himself. *The New York Times* reported that "Comey tweeted minutes after the president crowed again on Twitter about his Friday firing of FBI deputy director Andrew McCabe, who the president said was 'caught.' Trump added: 'How many lies? How many leaks? Comey knew it all, and much more!...The Fake News is beside themselves that McCabe was caught, called out and fired. How many hundreds of thousands of dollars was given to wife's campaign by Crooked H friend, Terry M, who was also under investigation? How many lies? How many leaks? Comey knew it all, and much more!'" — Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [March 17, 2018](#).

To which Comey, who has a memoir coming out in April, responded tersely, "Mr. President, the American people will hear my story very soon. And they can judge for themselves who is honorable and who is not." — James Comey (@Comey) [March 17, 2018](#) Reported in: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/19/us/politics/trump-tweets-comey-mccabe.html>.

But most shocking of all was **the tweet of former CIA director John Brennan** on Saturday, who said, "When the full extent of your venality, moral turpitude, and political corruption becomes known, you will take your rightful place as a disgraced demagogue in the dustbin of history. You may scapegoat Andy McCabe, but **you will not destroy America...America will triumph over you.**" [emphasis added] <https://twitter.com/JohnBrennan/status/974978856997224448>.

And on Wednesday, *The New York Times* reported that, "**John Brennan, a Former C.I.A. Director, Suggests Russia 'May Have Something' on President Trump**" on Tuesday's MSNBC "Morning Joe." Brennan "speculated that the Russians 'may have something on him personally,' referring to Mr. Trump....'I think he's afraid of the president of Russia,' said Mr. Brennan, now retired from government service and a critic of Mr. Trump." <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/21/us/politics/trump-mueller-russia.html>.

4. There is danger in the wind. And the distinct smell of gunpowder. We point our readers to a long review article in this month's *New York Review of Books* by Adam Hochschild, Lecturer in Journalism at UC Berkeley and co-founder of *Mother Jones* magazine. Hochschild is also the husband of Berkeley sociologist Arlie Hochschild, whose book, *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*, we have referenced in these news summaries more than once. Hochschild reviews **three books about the history of gun culture in America**. The conclusions—both of the books reviewed and of Hochschild's essay—are alarming. He says, "[i]f reason played any part in the American love affair with guns, things would have been different a long time ago and we would not have so many mass shootings like the one that took the lives of seventeen high school students in Parkland, Florida on February 14. Almost everywhere else in the world, if you proposed that virtually any adult not convicted of a felony should be allowed to carry a loaded pistol—openly or concealed—into a bar, a restaurant, or classroom, people would send you off for a psychiatric examination. Yet many states allow this, and in Iowa, a loaded firearm can be carried in public by someone who's completely blind. Suggest, in response to the latest mass shooting, that still more of us should be armed, and people in most other countries would ask you what you're smoking."

The first book is a study of the NRA and the history of America's love affair with its guns: "In *Armed in America*, Patrick J. Charles points out that after each horrendous mass shooting, like the one we've just seen at Parkland, not only does the NRA once again talk about good guys with guns stopping bad guys with guns, but gun purchases soar and stock prices of their makers rise. However, only a tiny fraction of the more than 30,000 Americans killed by guns each year die in these mass shootings. Roughly two thirds are suicides; the rest are more mundane homicides, and about five hundred are accidents. Some 80,000 additional people are injured by firearms each year. All these numbers would be far less if we did not have more guns than people in the United States, and if they were not so freely available to almost anyone .... [A]t least at the national level, don't expect new laws to be sweeping and significant. The Koch brothers have been major financial supporters of the NRA because it so reliably turns out right-wing voters on election day. A vocal and militant NRA also helps protect people like the Kochs by encouraging the illusion that the real source of political power in America is gun ownership—rather than, say, great

wealth.”

Some of this right-wing resentment is accelerated by the sense, recorded by both the Hochschilds, that the workers have been betrayed, not by the wealthy plutocrats, but by “liberals” who have taken from them their jobs, their privilege, their women (by feminism), and now their guns. This sense of betrayal by an enemy within is fueled by the NRA, which sees “liberals” as fundamentally treacherous. [See the NRA magazine cover, below.]

Indeed, the next two books study the militia movements in America, and it is clear to Hochschild that the militias are both growing and increasingly representing the resentment that fueled the Trump revolt. This is frightening for two reasons: the NRA has aligned itself ideologically with these feelings of threat and rage; and the growing sense of the illegitimacy of any resistance to Trump may stoke mistrust of any political confrontation with him. Thus, if, as Hochschild sees it, the militias decide to seize more Federal land out west, there may be either more local violence or, if the Trump administration does *not* confront them and retake the land (as he feels is not impossible), this may embolden them and spread violence further. In the second case, if Trump is impeached or loses in 2020, it is quite possible this growing movement will simply not accept as legitimate any such outcome. A kind of low-level civil war is not out of the question, says Hochschild: "To anyone on the far right his defeat or removal will be virtual proof of a conspiracy to restore the New World Order. Will these gun-toting men in boots and camouflage flak jackets accept his departure from the White House quietly?" <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2018/04/05/guns-bang-for-the-buck/>. *\*Highly recommended reading.*

5. Speaking of low-level civil war: Is there a **coming battle for the soul of the Democratic Party**? Can we all get along? In a sharply-worded op-ed in *The Washington Post* on March 6, Katrina vanden Heuvel, publisher of *The Nation*, warns that, [a]cross the country, including states and districts that Democrats have written off in prior elections, sustained grass-roots energy is boosting the party’s prospects. Yet there is also serious cause for concern, as some Democrats seem intent on sapping that energy in an attempt to reassert control of the party. In late February, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), House

Democrats' official campaign arm, [infuriated progressives](#) by clumsily inserting itself in the primary in Texas's 7th Congressional District. Although it's not unusual for party committees to pick sides in primaries, the DCCC took the extraordinary step of publishing opposition research against Laura Moser, a progressive, pro-choice woman who has been a leader in the resistance to Trump."

Vanden Heuvel reports that, "Tensions between the party and the progressive movement are threatening to bleed beyond this year's midterms into the 2020 presidential race. Democratic National Committee members [met last week](#) to discuss [proposed changes](#) recommended by the Unity Reform Commission that was formed in the wake of the 2016 primary to make the nomination process more open, fair and inclusive of insurgent campaigns and their supporters. A vote on the proposals could come as early as this week, but there is a sense among those close to the debate that the party is unlikely to embrace the sweeping reforms that progressives are pushing for." She also takes to task EMILY's List: "Also disheartening is that there are several cases of Democratic women attempting to thwart strong female candidates whose opponents are less progressive but more connected to donors. There is [evidence suggesting](#) that Emily's List, which works to elect pro-choice women, has endorsed candidates (including one of Moser's primary rivals) on the strength not of their progressive values but of their fundraising potential." [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/democratic-party-establishment-its-time-to-respect-insurgent-progressives/2018/03/06/da753990-2095-11e8-94da-ebf9d112159c\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/democratic-party-establishment-its-time-to-respect-insurgent-progressives/2018/03/06/da753990-2095-11e8-94da-ebf9d112159c_story.html).

6. For more on that **report on EMILY's List**, read the long, controversial report by Clio Chang, formerly a writer for *The New Republic*, in *Splinter* on Feb. 28. Chang argues that "EMILY's List often works in lockstep with the greater Democratic establishment. And the party has shown that it can be stubbornly slow to change. (Many sources seemed hesitant to publicly criticize EMILY's List, given how large they loom in Democratic politics.)" Of course, the purpose of EMILY's List has always been fundraising. It was founded in 1985 to raise money to elect women to the Senate: at the time, no woman had been elected to the Senate who was not filling an unfilled seat. EMILY stands for "Early Money is Like Yeast": it makes the dough rise. "Since then, EMILY's List has become a behemoth organization within

the Democratic Party. It has played a big part in changing the political landscape for women over the past three decades. In the 2016 election cycle, the group raised a record [\\$90 million](#). As the largest national resource for women in politics, securing EMILY's List backing is an essential boost for for many women running for office.”

"Yet despite incremental gains over the past decade, the number of women at all levels of government has [plateaued](#) at around 20 percent. When it comes to female representation in the legislature, the [U.S. ranks 99th](#) in the world. In the last two election cycles, EMILY's List came out with a poor showing—in 2016, the group had a 40 percent win rate according to [OpenSecrets.org](#), a website that tracks money in politics. In 2014, a notoriously bad year for Democrats, the group only won a quarter of the time. It would be unfair to single out EMILY's List for these losses; the Democratic Party itself has been [decimated in every level of government](#) over the past decade. And in the year since the 2016 election, the party in general—which desperately needs to mobilize and motivate a younger and more diverse electorate—has proven to be slow to catch up to the changing political dynamics of the country.” At the same time, Chang reports charges by candidates across the country that money has become more important to the List and to the Democratic Party than principle. Still, it must be acknowledged that, "EMILY's List was always intended to be an organization that changes the status quo—the fact that the Democratic Party willingly embraces pro-choice female candidates today is a testament to that work.” But Chang suggests that the obsession with big money still distorts the priorities of the Democratic establishment. <https://splinternews.com/how-emily-s-list-lost-its-way-1823399658>. [Locally, it is worth noting [that EMILY's List endorsed Marie Newman](#) the progressive candidate who opposed Rep. Dan Lipinski in the IL 3rd District.]

7. A similar long-form report in *The Intercept* on Jan. 23 by Ryan Grim and Lee Fang argues that "across the country, **the DCCC, its allied groups, or leaders within the Democratic Party** are working hard against some of these new [progressive] candidates for Congress, publicly backing their more established opponents, according to interviews with more than 50 candidates, party operatives, and members of Congress. Winning the support of Washington heavyweights, including the DCCC — implicit or explicit — is critical for endorsements back home and a boost to

fundraising. In general, it can give a candidate a tremendous advantage over opponents in a Democratic primary. In district after district, the national party is throwing its weight behind candidates who are out of step with the national mood.” [emphasis added]

However, they also report that "In assessing the strength of candidates for Congress this cycle, we have put a greater premium on their grassroots engagement and local support, recognizing the power and energy of our allies on the ground," said DCCC Communications Director Meredith Kelly. 'A deep and early connection to people in the district is always essential to winning, but it's more important than ever at this moment in our history.' The committee, meanwhile, has made [major investments](#) in grassroots organizing, field work and candidate training, which also represents a genuine change."

And yet, just to emphasize the rifts still plaguing the party, "For the first time since 2006, the Blue Dog Coalition, the right-leaning Democratic group that prides itself on promoting socially conservative, business-friendly lawmakers, has worked with the DCCC to select the party's candidates for the 2018 midterms .... Operatives from the DCCC meet on a weekly basis with the Blue Dogs to discuss recruitment and how to best steer resources to a growing slate of centrist Democratic candidates, [according to Politico.](#)" <https://theintercept.com/2018/01/23/dccc-democratic-primaries-congress-progressives/> [Locally, it is worth noting the [DCCC backed Blue Dog Rep. Dan Lipinski](#) in the IL 3rd District.]

8. *“What? Facebook is not really in business to connect me to my mother and my dear friends?” “What? Facebook is not really in business to help me organize cool demonstrations and protests and flash mobs?” “What on earth do you mean Facebook has to make a profit by selling MY PERSONAL INFORMATION to marketers?? I am SO shocked!!”*

The **Cambridge Analytica scandal** continues to deepen as more is known. Though is a bit technical, the basic operation here—which may or may not have broken any laws—is that CA stole very confidential psychological profile information (which had been freely given to an app) from FB and then used it to aid the Trump campaign. How well this actually *worked* is still debatable. **Here is a quick summary**, for those still wondering what the fuss is about, from *The New York Times*'s Zeynep

Tufekci, Professor at the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina.

"In 2014, Cambridge Analytica, a voter-profiling company that would later provide services for Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, reached out with a request on Amazon's 'Mechanical Turk' platform, an online marketplace where people around the world contract with others to perform various tasks. Cambridge Analytica was looking for people who were American Facebook users. It offered to pay them to download and use a personality quiz app on Facebook called thisisyourdigitallife. About 270,000 people installed the app in return for \$1 to \$2 per download. The app "scraped" information from their Facebook profiles as well as detailed information from their friends' profiles. Facebook then provided all this data to the makers of the app, who in turn turned it over to Cambridge Analytica....

"A few hundred thousand people may not seem like a lot, but because Facebook users have a few hundred friends each on average, **the number of people whose data was harvested reached about 50 million.** Most of those people had no idea that their data had been siphoned off (after all, they hadn't installed the app themselves), let alone that the data would be used to shape voter targeting and messaging for Mr. Trump's presidential campaign.... This wasn't a breach in the *technical* sense. It is something even more troubling: an all-too-natural consequence of Facebook's business model, which involves having people go to the site for social interaction, only to be quietly subjected to an enormous level of surveillance.... Facebook makes money, in other words, by profiling us and then selling our attention to advertisers, political actors and others. These are Facebook's true customers, whom it works hard to please... Facebook even creates 'shadow profiles' of nonusers. That is, even if you are not on Facebook, the company may well have compiled a profile of you, inferred from data provided by your friends or from other data. This is an involuntary dossier from which you cannot opt out in the United States." [emphasis added]

It would be difficult for many users to just drop out of Facebook (especially in some countries where FB is a better platform than the general internet). In fact, once you have used FB it is very difficult to drop out at all. The only

solution might be government regulation, though that is unlikely. Tufecki concludes, "A business model based on vast data surveillance and charging clients to opaquely target users based on this kind of extensive profiling will inevitably be misused. The real problem is that billions of dollars are being made at the expense of the health of our public sphere and our politics, and crucial decisions are being made unilaterally, and without recourse or accountability." <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/19/opinion/facebook-cambridge-analytica.html>. *\*Highly recommended reading.*

**9. Who are Cambridge Analytica, anyway?** The story is not only one of high-tech mischief. It gets weirder. Read the summary by *The Times*'s Michelle Goldberg on March 19. She says, "Cambridge Analytica, the shadowy data firm that helped elect Donald Trump, specializes in 'psychographic' profiling, which it sells as a sophisticated way to digitally manipulate huge numbers of people on behalf of its clients. But apparently, when you're trying to win a campaign, prostitutes, bribes and spies work pretty well too. On Monday, Britain's Channel 4 News [ran an explosive exposé](#) of the embattled company. Going undercover as a potential client, its reporter filmed Cambridge Analytica's chief executive, Alexander Nix, talking about entrapping his clients' opponents by sending 'very beautiful' Ukrainian sex workers to their homes. He spoke of offering bribes to candidates while secretly filming them and putting the footage online, of employing fake IDs and bogus websites. Mark Turnbull, the managing director of Cambridge Analytica Political Global, described how the company 'put information into the bloodstream of the internet' and then watched it spread."

CA is an offshoot of the SCL group, Goldberg reports: "Created in 2013, Cambridge Analytica is an offshoot of the SCL Group, a British company that specialized in disinformation campaigns [in the developing world](#). It's mostly owned by the Mercer family, billionaire right-wing donors and strong Trump supporters. Before becoming the Trump campaign's chief executive, Steve Bannon was Cambridge Analytica's vice president. Trump's former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, who has since pleaded guilty to lying to the F.B.I., also [served as an adviser](#) to the company." <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/19/opinion/trump-cambridge-analytica-facebook.html>. *\*Highly recommended reading.*

An **article in *Buzzfeed* provides details** of dirty trick ads posted to FB by Make America Number One, a superPAC run by the Mercers for Trump: "The video ads — which were directed at specific audience segments on Facebook — pushed themes of Clinton's corruption, her supposed failing health, and referred to her as "the most corrupt politician of our time" while suggesting she "might be the first president to go to jail." [https://www.buzzfeed.com/craigsilverman/cambridge-analytica-says-they-won-the-election-for-trump?utm\\_term=.ljX07InlEN#.dxKa5KoKQ7](https://www.buzzfeed.com/craigsilverman/cambridge-analytica-says-they-won-the-election-for-trump?utm_term=.ljX07InlEN#.dxKa5KoKQ7).

Whether the ads actually had an effect, or had the effect promoted by Cambridge Analytica, is questionable, though, and some sources claim the company overpromised and underdelivered, according to *Business Insider*: <http://www.businessinsider.com/cambridge-analytica-facebook-scandal-trump-cruz-operatives-2018-3>.

10. On Thursday, says *The Washington Post*, "**The House...passed a sweeping \$1.3 trillion spending bill** that makes good on President Trump's promises to increase military funding while blocking most of his proposed cuts to domestic programs and placing obstacles to his immigration agenda." Read the details of the proposed budget, here: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/house-prepares-for-rapid-vote-today-on-jam-packed-13-trillion-spending-deal/2018/03/22/2074fe7e-2dd6-11e8-8688-e053ba58f1e4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/house-prepares-for-rapid-vote-today-on-jam-packed-13-trillion-spending-deal/2018/03/22/2074fe7e-2dd6-11e8-8688-e053ba58f1e4_story.html).

11. Do **Trump's attacks on Robert Mueller** over the weekend presage a coming firing? There is considerable debate in the press over what, if anything, Trump is planning to do, as well as what, if anything, Republicans will do about it. An article in *The Washington Post* is typical: "Lindsey Graham says firing Mueller would be the 'beginning of the end' for Trump. Don't bet on it." So runs the title of James Downie's analysis. "On CNN's 'State of the Union' Sunday, Sen. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) **told** moderator Jake Tapper that Americans shouldn't fear: If the president fired Mueller, 'that would be the beginning of the end of his presidency, because we're a rule-of-law nation.' Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) echoed that: 'I would expect to see considerable pushback in the next couple days in urging the president not to go there.' Graham and Flake may believe that, but they're wrong: As long as Republicans control

Congress, Trump can do what he wants. The end will begin only at the ballot box. More than a year into Trump's presidency, there's nothing to suggest Republicans will hinder Trump from firing Mueller and/or ending the Russia probe."

And *Politico* on March 19 reported that Trump's hiring of an anti-Mueller lawyer, Joseph diGenova, bodes ill for Mueller's future. "'There was a brazen plot to illegally exonerate Hillary Clinton and, if she didn't win the election, to then frame Donald Trump with a falsely created crime,' [diGenova said](#) during a Fox News appearance in January. He added: 'Make no mistake about it: A group of FBI and DOJ people were trying to frame Donald Trump of a falsely created crime.'" The site reports that the more conciliatory attorney, Ty Cobb, may be pressured out.

On Thursday, Trump attorney **John Dowd**, who had called for the Justice Department to close down the investigation, **resigned from Trump's legal team**: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-attorney-john-dowd-resigns-amid-shake-up-in-presidents-legal-team/2018/03/22/0472ce74-2de3-11e8-8688-e053ba58f1e4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-attorney-john-dowd-resigns-amid-shake-up-in-presidents-legal-team/2018/03/22/0472ce74-2de3-11e8-8688-e053ba58f1e4_story.html).

For a good summary of Trump's weekend outburst, and the reactions to it, see *The New York Times's* Sunday report: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/18/us/politics/trump-mueller.html>.

Look at this very interesting ***Politico* report, "If Trump Fires Mueller, Will He Reap the Whirlwind?** A constitutional crisis or just another Teflon Don moment? Ten political pundits weigh in." [emphasis added] The general consensus of the interviews was summarized by Republican strategist Ana Navarro: "The [warnings](#) on Sunday against such a move, from congressional Republicans including House Speaker Paul Ryan and Sen. Jeff Flake, ring hollow because the same congressional Republicans haven't acted on legislation that might actually protect the American people from obstruction of justice by their own president. These lawmakers would be a lot better off protecting the country and themselves from such an action by passing the Graham-Booker legislation, which would check the executive branch's ability to remove a special counsel and give an added layer of protection to a possible politically motivated, self-interested firing of Mueller. But Congress hasn't acted on it."

Micheal Kazin, editor of *Dissent*, perhaps put the political fallout most succinctly: "And hardly any Republican politicians (and no Fox hosts) have broken with him over [Trump's attacks on Mueller]. Why would this change if he fired Mueller? Unless the special counsel presents unimpeachable evidence of collusion, which seems doubtful, his firing may actually fire up Trump's core voters more than it alienates them. Most already think he is being hounded unfairly and like it when he fights back. On the other hand, the controversy over the firing (depending when it occurs) will likely dominate politics until the midterm elections and make it impossible to pass any legislation of significance in the Senate if not the House. And because of it, Republicans will lose the House and quite a few governorships in the fall. It will be a lot like 1974—even without a presidential resignation." Overall, **a good summary of thinking on the issue of a Mueller firing.** <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/03/20/if-trump-fired-mueller-roundup-217661>.

12. **Latest polls** are worth mentioning. *Politico* reports that "Fifty-three percent of respondents to a new Quinnipiac University poll released Wednesday said they disapprove of the way President Donald Trump is handling his job as president, the lowest that number has been in more than a year. Trump's 40 percent approval rating in the newly released [poll](#) is just two points shy of his high-water mark as president — the 42 percent approval rating poll respondents gave him in early February, 2017. The president's approval rating is up 2 points [relative](#) to the previous Quinnipiac poll, released March 7, while his disapproval rating dropped 3 points over that same stretch." The site offers other breakdowns as well. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/21/poll-trump-approval-ratings-477759>. The aggregator, *FiveThirtyEight* has overall popularity at 40.6%; *RealClearPolitics* aggregates at 41.9%. Note that different weights for several polls and pollsters will produce slightly different aggregations. <https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/trump-approval-ratings/>; [https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/president\\_trump\\_job\\_approval-6179.html](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/president_trump_job_approval-6179.html).

13. At the same time, on March 20, Jennifer Rubin of *The Washington Post* believes that "**Republicans are in denial about a blue wave.**" She reports on a detailed NBC poll that found, among other indicators, "In GOP-

held districts, the GOP preference of 14 points in January dropped to **zero**. [emphasis in original] 'Given that so much of the 2018 House battleground is in red/purple areas, the GOP being in single digits — or even — in Republican-held districts is a problem,'" said the poll. "That would be an understatement. Moreover, Democrats hold huge leads among millennials (59 to 29 percent), women (57 to 34 percent), whites with a college degree (55 to 42 percent), independents (48 to 36 percent) and older voters (52 to 41 percent). The older voter numbers are especially problematic because older voters turn out in higher numbers in midterms than other groups and because this was previously a base of President Trump's support (Trump won over-65 voters by a margin of [52 to 47 percent on Election Day](#) while Republican [House candidates won this group by a 53 to 45 percent margin](#).)" Moreover, Rubin reports, "Even among groups in which the GOP leads, the GOP margin has shriveled in comparison with Trump's Election Day numbers.... Throw in the three to five seats Democrats are likely to pick up in Pennsylvania thanks to the court-ordered redistricting and it is looking rather bleak for Republicans." In short, despite Trump's popularity among Republicans, it is thin enough popularity to augur a blue wave in midterm elections. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/wp/2018/03/20/republicans-are-in-denial-about-a-blue-wave/>.

14. We conclude with an opinion piece from Eugene Robinson that is both an analysis of Trump's current behavior and a warning: "**It's not your imagination. Trump is getting worse**" is his headline. "It's not your imagination. Donald Trump's occupancy of the White House is every bit as insane, corrupt and dangerous as you might fear. Witness this [jaw-dropping message](#) to the sitting president of the United States from the former director of the Central Intelligence Agency [he here quotes John Brennan, whose astonishing tweet we quoted above in number 3, which ended with, "you will not destroy America...America will triumph over you"]. Says Robinson, "There is no 'on the other hand' in our current predicament. If Trump were on some kind of learning curve, we'd see some evidence by now. If anything, he is getting worse — perhaps because he senses that the Mueller investigation is closing in, perhaps because he is just hopelessly overwhelmed by the job. At this point, I suppose it's a good thing that he spends so much time watching Fox News, playing golf and calling old cronies for emotional support. Maybe it's better that he wallow in self-absorption rather than actually try to run the government, since he has

no idea how to make things better but is eminently capable of making them worse.... If Trump does try to fire Mueller, House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) should get much of the blame. They have given Trump no reason to believe they will ever stand up to him.

"Fortunately, the Constitution gives ultimate power to you and me. **With every outrageous, shocking and depressing week, the November election becomes more important.** The Trump presidency will keep going from bad to worse, and it is our responsibility to use our votes to make it stop." [emphasis added] [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/its-not-your-imagination-trump-is-getting-worse/2018/03/19/36acac5e-2bac-11e8-8ad6-fbc50284fce8\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/its-not-your-imagination-trump-is-getting-worse/2018/03/19/36acac5e-2bac-11e8-8ad6-fbc50284fce8_story.html).

Below: The April NRA Magazine: taking aim at the liberal media—and selling the guns to do it.



15. Most of our readers were likely engaged enough in the elections on Tuesday night to know the outcomes, both at state and district levels. But for full results, see two good sites, the Dupage Electoral Commission (for that county's races), and *The New York Times* report on all Illinois races: [https://www.dupageresults.com/IL/DuPage/73687/Web02.194199/#/c/C\\_2](https://www.dupageresults.com/IL/DuPage/73687/Web02.194199/#/c/C_2); <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/20/us/elections/results-illinois-primary-elections.html>. *The Times* has a handy mouse-over interactive state map.

16. The big stories of course, that were followed nationally, were the governor's race and the Lipinski-Newman contest. On the former, a shrewd piece by Natasha Korecki, who reports from Illinois for *Politico*, is titled simply, "Is Bruce Rauner toast?" Unsurprisingly, her lead is, "In the

span of one day, Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner's fortunes went from bad to worse. He was already widely considered to be the most vulnerable incumbent governor in the country. Then came Tuesday's Illinois primary, where he spent \$17 million on TV ads but barely squeaked out a victory against a nearly unknown state legislator." Korecki describes the big fault lines in the Republican party, over the well-known social issues that lay behind the Ives candidacy. "Those fissures showed in the primary voting results," she says, "with Ives not only beating Rauner in many conservative strongholds in southern Illinois, but also in suburban and exurban areas the governor won easily in 2014, including DuPage, McHenry, Will and Kane counties." [https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/21/bruce-rauner-endangered-illinois-governor-479339?lo=ap\\_f1](https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/21/bruce-rauner-endangered-illinois-governor-479339?lo=ap_f1).

On the **Lipinski race**, a national story by Reuters was picked up by *The New York Times*: "Democratic Representative Dan Lipinski held off a stiff challenge from businesswoman Marie Newman to win a nationally watched congressional primary in Illinois that pitted a long-serving centrist incumbent against the party's liberal wing." <https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2018/03/21/us/politics/21reuters-usa-election-illinois.html>.

17. *The Daily Herald* reported on Wednesday morning that **Peter Roskam immediately offered to debate** the winning Democratic candidate for the 6th district, Sean Casten. "Casten said...Roskam's eagerness to debate indicates 'he's scared about losing.'" <http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/naperville-sun/news/ct-nvs-roskam-casten-6th-race-st-0323-20180322-story.html>.

Best wishes, and Peace,  
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