The Useful and the Useless
By Robert Gorte, Financial Editor

The battle lines are forming. You’re standing on the prow of an ocean liner cutting through the icy waters of the North Atlantic. A huge iceberg looms dead ahead. You’ve seen it for ever so long, but now it’s too close, and the liner too big and fast, to avoid the collision. You quietly make your way to the lifeboats, knowing they’re the only chance for saving yourself and your loved ones. Below decks, an orchestra plays a waltz and oblivious revelers dance. Most people don’t foresee the world’s inevitable collision with the iceberg of unsustainable fantasy. When it happens, they’ll respond predictably, with panic and cowardice. Those who’ve seen it coming and moved to the lifeboats will experience their own rolling emotions, attenuated by recognition of the logic behind the disaster. While the forewarned have dreaded impact, many will also welcome it, in the way one welcomes an unpleasant medical procedure: let’s get it over with. The motive is not malice, but conviction born of experience that actions have consequences and there’s no escaping them. After seemingly inexplicable and interminable delay, consequences shall arrive, amplified by the tawdry stratagems that promoted delay.

It will come as a surprise to many, but governments cannot suspend reality. Their arsenal, when things break down, stratagems that promoted delay.

Executive Intelligence Summary – 31 March 2017
By Samuel Culper, Intelligence Editor

Bottom Line Up Front: One thing we’ve learned over the past several years is that decision-makers at the highest levels of the U.S. Intelligence Community are more interested in conducting cyber offense than defense. Reuters discovered this week that 90 percent of the federal cyber budget is used for offensive operations, and just 10 percent for defense. I’m going to dive a bit deeper into this story for you…

Starting with the Snowden leaks in 2013, we learned (or had our suspicions confirmed) that NSA was really good at their jobs. After 9/11, the US Intelligence Community began to prioritize “gathering intelligence” (SIGINT) over “defending against the iceberg, it will be obvious that governments’ guns are not wands, freeing citizens from the necessity of producing as much or more than they consume. They cannot compel innovators to innovate or producers to produce. While coercive power comes from one end of a gun, none of the powers that produce progress (and the gun) magically materialize at the other end.

It is said that America is a society divided. True enough, but the important question is: along what lines? Crisis and social breakdown will provide clarification: it’s governments and their beneficiaries versus producers. In other words, those who don’t do useful things versus those who do.

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If There Be Lawlessness
By T. L. Davis

Things are proceeding so fast toward cultural and political meltdown that it is difficult to keep up. City states such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Chicago have declared their independence from the union and are in open rebellion. Call it what you will, take the MSM meme of protecting illegal aliens if you choose, but it is nothing less than secession by disobedience. It is a flagrant act of rebellion against federal authority and should be met with conquest in the same manner the British did with an invasion.

Typically, as a Constitutionalist, there is the 10th Amendment to be considered here, except that national security is a delineated power of the federal government. The concept of “Nationalization” is among the powers of Congress, not the purview of random city councils. It is also the duty of the President to ensure that all laws are “faithfully executed.”

But, here is another prime example of the corrupt media hiding, through lies of omission, the true fact of this rebellion. It is none other. It is a direct threat to the stability of the United States and the rule of law, which has been under constant assault for decades. Federal judges openly disregard clearly Constitutional acts of the duly elected President and we are expected to wait for the legal processes?

There are hearings being held to discover that for which there is no evidence ever presented, to suggest that the President colluded with a foreign power to rig the latest Presidential election. This is being held up as the most important news of the day. While, at the same time and totally ignored, it has been discovered that there was “incidental” surveillance of the Trump campaign by the previous administration and subsequent dispersal of that illegally obtained information throughout domestic and foreign intelligence agencies at the direction of the former President. These are felonies, indictable under federal law. There is now an open admission of this surveillance and dispersal of illegally obtained and disseminated information by the previous administration by Evelyn Farkas, Deputy Secretary of Defense, on the Morning Joe show on MSNBC aired in early March. Her arrest and waterboarding should be imminent.

All of this begs the question: What laws will you openly disobey?

We are being shown, by political leaders across the nation, heads of their state, that it is perfectly acceptable to refuse to obey laws with which one disagrees. It is a showdown that will either result in the arrest and trial for treason of these leaders, or it will signal to everyone that this is perfectly reasonable behavior to pick and choose which federal laws will be obeyed and which can be shrugged off.

Now, I know it doesn’t work the same way for our lowly citizens, but isn’t that the mark of a failed na-

tional security? Where political leaders can flout and disregard law without fear of reprisal? Does this not make us a “banana republic” and therefore subject to open rebellion?

It is a direct threat to the stability of the United States and the rule of law, which has been under constant assault for decades. Federal judges openly disregard clearly Constitutional acts of the duly elected President and we are expected to wait for the legal processes?

Let us start in the towns and cities and disregard the
By Diane Rufino

SECTION 1. S.L. 2016-3 and S.L. 2016-99 are repealed.

SECTION 2. Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 81A. Preemption of Regulation of Access to Multiple Occupancy Restrooms."

§ 143-760. Preemption of regulation of access to multiple occupancy restrooms, showers, or changing facilities.

State agencies, boards, offices, departments, institutions, branches of government, including The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System, and political subdivisions of the State, including local boards of education, are preempted from regulation of access to multiple occupancy restrooms, showers, or changing facilities, except in accordance with an act of the General Assembly.

SECTION 3. No local government in this State may enact or amend an ordinance regulating private employment practices or regulating public accommodations.

SECTION 4. This act is effective when it becomes law. Section 3 of this act expires on December 1, 2020.

Does HB142 really repeal HB2?

First, let's recall how HB2 came about. In February 2016, the city of Charlotte passed a law banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity in public accommodations and other areas. North Carolina voided the Charlotte law with HB2, the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, which removed anti-discrimination clauses protecting the LGBT community and mandated that in government buildings people must use the bathroom or changing facility corresponding to the sex on their birth certificates. HB2 became known as the anti-transgender bill.

Roy Cooper ran for governor on the promise that he would repeal HB2 and end the “discrimination” against transgender individuals. The first repeal effort failed miserably and the ones after that failed as well. It seemed pretty clear that Republicans and Democrats were both concerned about the safety implications in a policy that allowed access to bathrooms merely based on a person’s choice of gender rather than nature's design. [Note that only when an individual has taken the most extreme feminization or masculinization steps, gender reassignment surgery, will gender be changed on his or her birth certificate. An individual so committed will enter a bathroom without causing any anxiety to those living according to their biological gender. The issues of most concern are safety and the sense of security and privacy in a bathroom or shower or changing facility].

Although HB124 is termed a “repeal bill,” Gov. Roy Cooper calls it a “compromise bill.” Those in Charlotte and many in the LGBT community say it isn’t a repeal, it isn’t a compromise, and doesn’t do enough to protect transgender rights. In fact, the Charlotte Observer's editorial board called it “a repeal in name only” and wrote that Gov. Roy Cooper “failed spectacularly” in upholding his campaign promise to reject any deal that left North Carolina’s transgender community to those living according to their biological gender. The issues of most concern are safety and the sense of security and privacy in a bathroom or shower or changing facility.

According to professor Greg Wallace at Campbell Law School in Raleigh, HB124 is more about restoring the status quo, pre-HB2, with one exception: The law forbids government entities from enacting rules on multiple-occupancy bathrooms, showers and changing rooms unless it’s “in accordance with an act of the General Assembly.”

The bill also bans local governments such as Charlotte from enacting or amending an “ordinance regulating private employment practices or regulating public accommodations” until December 1, 2020. Before HB124, Wallace said, local governments were allowed to institute their own anti-discrimination ordinances. Now, with HB124, local governments, if you want to add a class to a list of those protected by the federal government -- and that means veterans, the elderly or unmarried adults, in addition to those in the LGBT community -- you have to go through Raleigh for the next 3½ years.

Why 2020? According to state Senate leader, Phil Berger, this will allow time for the federal litigation regarding transgender issues to play out. (The Supreme Court is going to have to decide if HB2 is on the table this year). With respect to public accommodations (such as bathrooms, changing rooms, etc), are there any current protections for sexual identity; that is, for transgender individuals?

Barring the Charlotte ordinance that sparked the debate, there were no state laws regarding bathroom usage. If a man went into the women’s restroom, or vice versa, Wallace said, he’d likely be asked to leave, and if he refused, he could be arrested for trespassing. Charlie’s ordinance allowed transgender individuals to use the public bathroom of the gender with which they identify. HB2 banned that, but does not specify what transgender people are to do except that state there will be no local regulation of public facilities that are inconsistent with an act of the General Assembly.

Similarly, there are currently no federal laws regulating bathroom usage. Federal law prohibits any public accommodation from discriminating on the basis of “race, color, religion, or national origin” but it makes no mention of sexual orientation or gender identity (nor does it address other issues such as age or marital status, for that matter).
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Unfortunately, cyber espionage is a massive and growing threat to national security. Former National Security Agency and U.S. Cyber Command chief Gen. Keith Alexander explained that foreign espionage directed at US commercial, industrial and economic targets has resulted in the “greatest transfer of wealth in history.” (Second perhaps to the Federal Reserve and the international banking cartel.) While the US Government and American companies are spending hundreds of billions of dollars in technology research and development, why is it so relatively easy for the Chinese or other nation-state cyber teams (or cyber criminals) to steal data that for the cost of peanuts?

Well, we know part of that answer. Recent NSA and CIA leaks show that US intelligence agencies are busy (and quite good at) identifying “bugs” in commercial and industrial software. Instead of alerting companies to these “bugs” — or exploitable vulnerabilities — so they can be patched to protect US networks, NSA is using these same bugs for their own collection. In other words, NSA wants to keep these exploits a secret, even at the risk of them being used by foreign intelligence against US companies and consumers. What these leaks show us is that NSA is prioritizing its offensive operations over the defense of its own nation.

In 2014, then-president Obama made a policy decision that NSA would have to disclose any bugs it identifies so the vulnerabilities can be patched to protect national interests… unless those bugs can be used by NSA or law enforcement… which is why NSA is sitting on so many vulnerabilities, some of which have undoubtedly been used by foreign governments to hack US targets.

And now we find out that it’s not only a problem at NSA or CIA, but it’s an endemic government-wide. Reuters reported that the federal government spends nine times as much on offensive operations and intelligence gathering than it does on defense. It should be no wonder that the US government is getting beat over the barrel by foreign adversaries. Virtually every week there’s news of another data leak or cyber exploitation — why is there not a larger effort to defend US national security in cyber space? With as many critical failures as we’ve experienced over the past several years alone, why isn’t more being done to defend the nation? But as problematic as this sounds, I and many others believe Americans are going to experience worse.

As far back as 2012, Gen. Keith Alexander was warning of the eventual implications when cyber exploitation moves from affecting just data to physical infrastructure. “What we need to worry about is when these transition from disruptive to destructive attacks, which is going to happen…. We have to be ready for that,” Gen. Alexander said. “The conflict is growing, the probably for crisis is mounting. While we have the time, we should think about and enact those things that ensure our security in this area,” he said. “And do it now, before the crisis.”

Fast forward five years and we finally have a president who’s serious about cybersecurity. One of the top three planks of President Trump’s agenda was increasing cybersecurity and fixing an inherently broken US cyber policy. This week, an official from the Trump administration said that they’re going to roll out a new strategy to improve overall security, I do believe that we should temper our expectations. One reason is because security is a culture, and one challenge for the Trump administration is getting employees in both the private and public sector to take part in this security culture. Another reason is because for years, the US Government has had staffing problems with being able to hire and retain cybersecurity professionals. There’s currently an unfilled hiring gap in cybersecurity for the US Government. And retaining talent is another challenge, according to one DHS official: “[W]hen we spend a couple years training forensics analysts, they’re very qualified, and they’re often spirited away by the private sector.”

My professional opinion is to continue to prepare for potential systems disruption. That’s what I advise my readers to do, and the message I’ll continue to spread.

By A. F. Branco, comicallyincorrect.com
If There Be Lawlessness

National Firearms Act, trample and run amok in the National Forests and National Parks across the West. If they will not arrest these few, how can they arrest the many? Is it not, then, a reasonable defense to declare inequality before the law? But, who will go to jail first? That is the real question is it not? Are we not capable of raising funds for a legal defense fund for just such willing participants? Do we not have the legal resources equal to that of a city or a state that declare their willingness to take these issues to trial?

Where do we decide to put up a resistance? It is going to cost some of us our lives. Is that not clear? I don't know what bail is for ripping up National Park Service tickets for trespassing, or rule violations, but is it that onerous? Do they put you in jail first? That is the real question is it not? Are they will not arrest these few, how can they arrest just improving your gardening skills. To be held at Lowe’s in Murphy. Call Pat Johnson at Lowe’s (828) 835-4660 to register. For more information contact Keith Wood at (828) 837-2210.

April 10—The Well Armed Woman, Georgia Mountain Chapter, Blairs ville, GA. 5:30 p.m. A women’s group dedicated to educating, equipping and empowering women gun owners. Meeting at 226 Gainesville Hwy, Suite C, Blairs ville, GA 30512. or more information please contact Carrie Brekke at twawgeorgia- mountainchapter@yahoo.com for information.

April 11—DAV Monthly Meeting, Blairs ville, GA. 7 pm – 8 pm. The Disabled American Veterans meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7pm in the Veterans Center. Held at the Veterans Building, 76 Old Blue Ridge Hwy. Blairs ville. For information please contact Mike Ruback 954-249-2707.

April 11—Cochrane NC ARES Formal Meeting, Murphy, NC, 7 pm. Our regularly scheduled second Tuesday meeting at the Robert Penland Senior Center, 69 Alpine Street in Murphy.

April 13—The Well Armed Woman, Murphy Chapter, Murphy, NC. 6 p.m. A women’s group dedicated to educating, equipping & empowering women gun owners. Meeting at Christian Martial Arts Center, 56 Valley River Ave, downtown Murphy. Contact Carrie Brekke at twawcherokecountync- chapter@gmail.com for information.

April 19—Soil Sampling and Amendments, Murphy, NC. 9 am - noon. Cherokee County Extension is offering vegetable gardening classes for those wanting to learn how to grow vegetables or just improving your gardening skills. To be held at Lowe's in Murphy. Call Pat Johnson at Lowe’s (828) 835-4660 to register. For more information contact Keith Wood at (828) 837-2210.

April 21—Insect, Disease & Weed Management, Murphy, NC. 9 am - noon. Cherokee County Extension is offering vegetable gardening classes for those wanting to learn how to grow vegetables or just improving your gardening skills. To be held at Lowe’s in Murphy. Call Pat Johnson at Lowe’s (828) 835-4660 to register. For more information contact Keith Wood at (828) 837-2210.

April 21-23 Heritage Life Skills, Waynesville, NC. Come and participate in this 6th Annual event that is filled with classes, demonstrations and workshops in vital preparedness and life skills. Immense yourself in three days of classes such as aquaponics, how to build a hot water system, suturing, edible & medicinal plants and many more! Various presenters are scheduled including the keynote Speaker, Dr. William R. Forstchen. Register early for discount. Go to carolinareadiness.com for pricing and registration form. Contact Carolina Readiness Supply at 828-456-5310 for further information.

April 26—Site Selection, Planting Techniques & Variety Selection, Murphy, NC. 9 am - noon. Cherokee County Extension is offering vegetable gardening classes for those wanting to learn how to grow vegetables or just improving your gardening skills. To be held at Lowe’s in Murphy. Call Pat Johnson at Lowe’s (828) 835-4660 to register. For more information contact Keith Wood at (828) 837-2210.

May 31-June 5—NC Patcon, Tarboro, NC. Featuring an old-fashioned East Carolina Style BBQ. Camping available on-site. $25, $14 ages 7-12, under 7 free. To be held at 94 Roberson School Road, Tarboro, NC. For more information and to sign up see freenorthcarolina.blogspot.com.