



## **Editorial Roundup: Excerpts from recent editorials**

August 16, 2017

Excerpts from recent editorials in the United States and abroad:

The Seattle Times on anti-hate protests:

The shocking white nationalism on display last weekend in Charlottesville, Virginia, is a relapse of an old cancer in America. We've seen the swastikas and "Sieg Heil" salutes before, but rarely on such a scale, and rarely ending in such a horrifying act of domestic terrorism, which left one woman dead and 19 others injured.

It is especially disturbing that the fascist fringe is utterly emboldened, planting seeds online with disaffected youth that will grow for a generation.

President Donald Trump plays an outsized role in the surge. His campaign and election was seen by the racist fringe as a trumpet blast, and his halfhearted rebukes have fueled, rather than doused, the flames again and again.

The Southern Poverty Law Center tracked a dramatic rise in hate groups, operating on and offline, from 2015 to 2016, as they coalesced around Trump like no other presidential candidate in decades.

The president's weak condemnation on Saturday, blaming "many sides" for the rioting, was a dog whistle for the fascists who were emboldened by the lack of criticism from the White House.

Belatedly, after bipartisan outrage and suspicion in some quarters about Trump's sympathies, the president clarified his position Monday, saying that "racism is evil" and condemning hate groups. But he was at it again on Tuesday, doubling down on his "many sides" obfuscation.

The counter-protests in Charlottesville, and in Seattle on Sunday, succeed when they overwhelm and mock the hateful and brittle ideology of white nationalism. They fail when they lapse into violence. In physical conflict between fascists and anti-hate protesters, the goons in the Hitler haircuts win. Peace protesters throwing punches is easy fodder for the far right looking for hypocrisy on the left.

And the racist fringe feeds off martyrdom. Just Google Robert Jay Mathews. The bankrobbing racist from Eastern Washington is lionized online for his fatal standoff with federal agents on Whidbey Island in the 1980s. Or Timothy McVeigh, or Dylann Roof.

As unsettling as the images of 21st-century Nazis are, Seattle and other cities must accommodate protests and parades across the political spectrum, because the First Amendment is the bedrock of our democracy.

Law enforcement everywhere should learn from the protest-management techniques of Seattle police, which were honed after the World Trade Organization debacle. Seattle police showed their skill by avoiding a brawl at Sunday's Westlake Park demonstrations, while Charlottesville police failed to do so.

Law-enforcement agencies will probably get another chance, either in Seattle or elsewhere. The fringe right is still pumped up from Charlottesville. They pledge to show up again in their white polo shirts. When the anti-hate majority of America responds, don't give the fascists what they want. Protest hate with peace

Online: <http://www.seattletimes.com/>

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Aug. 14

The Los Angeles Times on net neutrality regulations:

Pushed by its new Republican chairman, Ajit Pai, who seems to have never met a regulation he didn't want to kill, the Federal Communications Commission has proposed repealing the tough net neutrality rules his predecessor, Democrat Tom Wheeler, adopted in 2015 and replacing them with . well, that part's not clear. One possibility Pai floated is to have the FCC punt oversight of broadband providers such as Comcast and AT&T to the Federal Trade Commission, which can do little more to first-time offenders than tell them they'll be punished if they transgress again.

Pai's retreat would be the fifth pivot by the commission since phone and cable TV companies introduced always-on, high-speed Internet connections in the late 1990s. The regulatory gyrations haven't damaged the open, innovative nature of the Internet, at least not yet. But the uncertainty isn't helpful, and it isn't likely to end if Pai gets his way. The next time a Democrat takes the White House, a new FCC chairman will almost certainly push more vigorous efforts to prevent Comcast, AT&T and company from putting their thumbs on the Internet scales.

The obvious answer — and it has been obvious for years — is for Congress to prohibit broadband providers from picking winners and losers online by monkeying with the data on their networks, and to give the commission clear authority to enforce that prohibition. But lawmakers have been unwilling to arbitrate the dispute between broadband providers, which have toyed with the idea of extracting tolls from websites and services to support new business models, and Internet-based companies, which don't want to face any new barriers to competing online.

The heat generated by Pai's proposal — the commission has received 20 million public comments thus far, albeit many of them form letters generated by advocacy groups — and by congressional Republicans' controversial move to repeal the FCC's broadband privacy rules in March, might finally get Congress moving. Leaders of the House Energy and Commerce

Committee announced last month that they would hold a hearing in September on "ground rules for the Internet."

"With almost everyone in agreement about fundamental principles to prevent anti-competitive behavior such as throttling and blocking, I think we are closer than ever to achieving a lasting resolution," Chairman Greg Walden (R-Ore.) said in a statement.

As encouraging as that may sound, the initial witness list for the hearing betrays a dismaying ignorance about why net neutrality is an issue. The committee set the hearing up as something of a clash of titans, inviting the chief executives of the largest broadband providers and the biggest Internet companies, such as Google, Facebook and Netflix. The only thing missing was a steel cage.

The point of having net neutrality rules isn't to protect multibillion-dollar Internet companies. It's to give other companies a chance to join or topple them. The rapid pace of technological change makes even companies with enormous economies of scale vulnerable to disruption, especially when consumers can easily switch from one shiny online object to the next.

No question, Facebook and its ilk would prefer not to have to pay Comcast or Verizon for priority access to its customers if broadband providers were allowed to impose such fees. But if push came to shove, those are the companies that could and would pay. The start-up trying to be the next Facebook could not.

Curiously, Pai and other Republicans have voiced less concern about the prospects of these smaller online businesses — the ones likely to inject a crucial dose of innovation into the 21st century economy — than the ability of giant, consolidating broadband providers to invest in faster, more widely available services. Better broadband connections in rural America, poverty-stricken inner cities and other underserved areas is a most worthy goal. But those connections shouldn't come at the cost of net neutrality.

Leading broadband providers insist that they support an open, neutral Internet. The problem, they say, is the utility-style regulations the Wheeler-led FCC imposed to achieve that end. The Democrats on the commission voted to do so, however, because a federal appeals court said it was the only route to enforceable rules that would prohibit broadband providers from blocking or slowing connections to lawful sites and services, or to prioritize connections for a fee.

Pai's hands-off approach is the wrong answer. If Republican lawmakers don't like applying decades-old utility-style regulation to broadband providers, they need to work with Democrats to give the commission explicit new authority to protect the open Internet from interference. Otherwise, the fight over how to do that will be always-on too.

Online: <http://www.latimes.com/>

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Aug. 15

The Washington Post on President Trump's recent remarks on Charlottesville:

Tuesday was a great day for David Duke and racists everywhere. The president of the United States all but declared that he has their backs.

When a white supremacist stands accused of running his car into a crowd of protesters, killing one and injuring 19, Americans of goodwill mourn and demand justice. When this is done in the context of a rally where swastikas are borne and racist and anti-Semitic epithets hurled, the only morally justifiable reaction is disgust. When the nation's leader does not understand this, the nation can only weep.

On Saturday, after the murder of an innocent protester in Charlottesville followed marches that included armed men and Nazi salutes, President Trump's instinct was to blame both sides. Widespread criticism followed, including the resignations of business leaders from a White House advisory council and condemnation from political leaders of both parties. On Monday, Mr. Trump read a prepared statement condemning white supremacists and racism, delivering it in a manner suggesting he neither wrote nor endorsed the words. On Tuesday, he removed any doubt: His initial reaction, putting Nazis and those protesting them on equal moral footing, is how he really feels.

"I think there's blame on both sides. You look at — you look at both sides," Mr. Trump said to reporters in Trump Tower, adding that there were "very fine people, on both sides." We've all seen the videotape: One side was composed of Nazis, Klansmen and other avowed racists chanting "Jews will not replace us." The other side was objecting to their racism.

Yes, there are good and moral Americans who oppose the removal of statues of Confederate generals. Yes, there are reasonable Americans who fear that slaveholding Founding Fathers will be the next target. Notwithstanding Mr. Trump's comments Tuesday, we don't find it difficult to distinguish between a monument to George Washington, say, and statues to Confederate generals that were erected in the 20th century with the goal of maintaining white supremacy.

There may be a time to debate such questions — but not, as any national leader with a sense of decency would understand, now. Not in a time of mourning, with the wounds so fresh. Not when Mr. Trump has not even bothered to call the family of Heather Heyer, the young woman mowed down on Saturday. Not when Americans are looking for a clear and unequivocal condemnation of the hatred that brought those 700 marchers to Charlottesville.

That car in Charlottesville did not kill or wound just the 20 bodies it struck. It damaged the nation. Mr. Trump not only failed to help the country heal; he made the wound wider and deeper.

Online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/>

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Aug. 15

The Virginian-Pilot on the actions needed after the violent weekend in Charlottesville:

Tempting though it may be, do not look away from the awful tragedy that unfolded in Charlottesville over the weekend. Do not dismiss it or attempt to minimize its importance.

Stare directly into that hateful abyss. Confront it and see it for what it was. That is our charge today, as Americans and as Virginians.

A congregation of the so-called "alt-right" — an amalgamation of the hateful dregs of society — came to that community ostensibly to protest the removal of a Robert E. Lee statue, which the City Council voted in February to sell.

However, their true goal was confrontation. Groups like this seek conflict and the attention it receives. It helps spread their racist rhetoric and drives membership.

For that reason, University of Virginia President Teresa Sullivan tried to direct people away from the rally, urging members of the community to "not gratify their desire" for a spectacle. It was a noble message, though one that simply could not be heeded.

Not after Friday, when the white supremacists marched across the U.Va. campus with lighted torches, chanting Nazi slogans and goading bystanders. The scenes that evening — which were similar to a rally held by these same miscreants in May — evoked the Nuremberg rally depicted in Leni Riefenstahl's "Triumph of the Will."

But the scuffles that evening were merely a prelude to the horror that unfolded across Charlottesville on Saturday.

Rally organizers had refused to honor requests by city and police officials that the event be moved to another park, one that could accommodate the crowds and make it easier to keep everyone separated.

As the various groups participating in the "Unite the Right" rally poured into Emancipation (formerly Lee) Park, they were met by scores of members of law enforcement and faith groups who wanted to keep things peaceful and a number of anti-fascist counter-protesters eager to deliver a more physical message.

A state of emergency declaration issued by Gov. Terry McAuliffe could not keep simmering tensions from reaching a full boil.

Violence ensued. Weapons were used and chemical irritants were deployed. The fights were wide ranging and brutal. Downtown Charlottesville — truly one of the commonwealth's gems — devolved into a war zone.

But that wasn't the worst of it. After the rally had dispersed and many of the white supremacists had departed, counter-protesters gathered in celebration on Fourth Street.

A Dodge Challenger, which police say was driven by 20-year-old James A. Fields Jr., plowed into the crowd, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer and injuring 20 others before speeding off. Footage of the carnage is nauseating, the mindset of the driver impossible to fathom.

Later that day, a Virginia State Police helicopter dispatched to monitor the events in Charlottesville crashed in Albemarle County, killing Lt. H. Jay Cullen, 48, and Trooper-Pilot Berke M.M. Bates, who would have turned 41 on Sunday.

Condemnation was swift and harsh from across the political spectrum, in contrast with President Donald Trump's tepid tweets and statement. He followed on Monday with more pointed criticism of the "KKK, neo-Nazis, white supremacists and other hate groups," but it, too, was less than what citizens needed from their president.

The nation — and especially this president — cannot be weak when the forces of hatred attempt to flex their muscle. The white supremacist movement is resurgent precisely because too many refused to condemn their actions for far too long.

That includes Trump, who was more than willing to play along for political gain. One need only look to the White House, where Steve Bannon works, to know that Trump continues these cynical and dangerous calculations.

Worth noting is that Bannon is a native of Norfolk and a graduate of Virginia Tech. Richard Spencer, a leader of the alt-right movement, graduated from the University of Virginia and makes his home in Arlington.

So as much as this is a national problem, it is also an issue that Virginia must confront internally.

"We are stronger than you," Gov. McAuliffe said Saturday evening. "You have made our commonwealth stronger. You will not succeed. There is no place for you here. There is no place for you in America."

Now we must show that strength. We must show resolve. We must look directly at what transpired in Charlottesville and confront the racism that lives in our communities, our commonwealth and our nation.

This is our charge today and in the days ahead.

Online: <https://pilotonline.com/>

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Aug. 13

The Orange County Register on a U.S. Senate immigration proposal:

The nation's legal immigration system is in dire need of reform, but a new bill will only make us poorer and less free.

Republican Sens. Tom Cotton of Alabama and David Perdue of Georgia recently introduced the Reforming American Immigration for a Strong Economy, or RAISE, Act. The legislation, which has the endorsement of the Trump administration, would reduce legal immigration by half over 10 years and implement a new merit-based points system for determining immigration eligibility. Preferences would be given to those who are younger, have advanced degrees (especially in science and engineering fields), have a job offer with a high salary, score well on English-language assessment exams, or invest at least \$1.35 million in the country. The bill would also cap the number of refugees offered permanent residency to 50,000 per year.

The merit-based system is intended to be modeled after immigration systems in Canada and Australia, though critics point out that the United States permits fewer immigrants per capita than either of those nations — and this rate would only deteriorate further under the RAISE Act.

In a USA Today column, Cotton and Perdue claimed that their alterations to the immigration system would "give working-class families the raise they deserve." This is based on the argument that immigrants flood the country with cheap labor, lowering wages for native-born workers. The problem is, economic research does not bear out this widespread wage drop, except perhaps for the small percentage of high school dropouts.

Last year, for example, a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine study reviewed economic literature on immigration and concluded: "When measured over a period of 10 years or more, the impact of immigration on the wages of native-born workers overall is very small. To the extent that negative impacts occur, they are most likely to be found for prior immigrants or native-born workers who have not completed high school — who are often the closest substitutes for immigrant workers with low skills."

As Cato Institute immigration policy analyst Alex Nowrasteh noted in a recent blog post, "Congress restricted immigration to raise American wages at least three times in American history — 1882, 1924 and 1964. It failed each time."

Immigration does not affect overall wages much because new immigrants primarily compete with previous immigrants, not native-born workers. The jobs they take tend to be complements of, not substitutes for, natives' jobs. Moreover, immigrants are also additional consumers, which creates greater demand for goods and services — and thus more jobs. In these ways, immigration allows for greater specialization and economic growth.

It is curious that most of those who oppose additional immigration — whether "illegal" or "legal" — tend to be conservative. These same critics tend to advocate (rightly) for free-markets generally, yet they abandon these principles when thinking about the market for labor.

Too many conservatives who despise the central planning of an almighty government to dictate which goods and services should be offered, or provide favorable treatment to some, embrace the same government controls over who gets to live and work here.

Other immigration fears center on offering additional taxpayer-funded welfare benefits. This is a legitimate concern, though it is much more of an indictment of the expansive welfare state, not just the most recent crop of people to take advantage of it who qualify under existing rules.

Economic arguments aside, the proposed criteria for admission would only enhance the state's power to judge who deserves to be considered an American, which itself feels un-American. The RAISE Act promises prosperity, but fails to deliver, both in terms of economics and the individual liberty that has allowed our nation to flourish.

Online: <http://www.oeregister.com/>

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Aug. 14

China Daily on Trump, trade and the transactional approach to foreign affairs in light of the conflict with North Korea:

U.S. President Donald Trump will reportedly sign an executive memorandum on Monday authorizing the U.S. trade representative to determine whether to investigate the allegedly "unfair" Chinese trade practices, which could pave the way for punitive tariffs on Chinese exports.

But it is of critical strategic significance that his administration demonstrates reason and avoids making a rash decision it will soon regret.

Given Trump's transactional approach to foreign affairs, it is impossible to look at the matter without taking into account his increasing disappointment at what he deems as China's failure to bring into line the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. His idea of exploiting trade as a bargaining chip in dealings with China dates back to the campaign trail.

But instead of advancing the United States' interests, politicizing trade will only exacerbate the country's economic woes, and poison the overall China-U.S. relationship.

Blaming China for "unfair" trade is unfair in the first place. The trade imbalance, regular fodder for China-bashing on Capitol Hill, is, to a great extent, self-inflicted, an outcome of the U.S.' political restrictions on exports to China. Yet this essential aspect is conspicuously absent in the U.S.' narrative. The list of U.S. gains in trade with China can grow or shrink, depending on how trade issues are handled.

While Trump's prior identity as a businessman may explain his transactional propensity, the deal he seeks demands the impossible of Beijing.

It is unfair for him to consign the burden of dissuading Pyongyang on Beijing; likewise to accuse Beijing of doing "little" or "nothing".

East Asia expert and former U.S. ambassador to the Republic of Korea Christopher Hill was correct in observing Trump should not "outsource" the U.S.' own troubles to China.

As Chinese President Xi Jinping again told Trump on Saturday, Beijing also seeks denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It would not have voted in favor of the latest United Nations resolution against Pyongyang's missile/nuclear adventures if this was not the case. The only difference is, Beijing wants to break the circle of escalation.

By trying to incriminate Beijing as an accomplice in the DPRK's nuclear adventure and blame it for a failure that is essentially a failure of all stakeholders, Trump risks making the serious mistake of splitting up the international coalition that is the means to resolve the issue peacefully.

Hopefully Trump will find another path. Things will become even more difficult if Beijing and Washington are pitted against each other.

Online: <http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/>



