

Cato Policy Report

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“To Be Governed...”

TRUMP VOWED AMERICA “WILL NEVER BE A SOCIALIST COUNTRY”

Attorney General William P. Barr on Thursday suggested the United States consider taking an ownership stake in Finland’s Nokia and Sweden’s Ericsson to counter China’s bid to dominate the burgeoning 5G wireless market.

—*Washington Post*, February 6, 2020

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin indicated that the U.S. government would take stakes in airlines in exchange for billions of dollars in direct grants to the companies.

—*Wall Street Journal*, March 26, 2020

PIGS TO THE TROUGH

From Boeing Co. to Verizon Communications, scores of U.S. companies and industries are furiously lobbying Congress to add measures to the Trump administration’s massive stimulus package to deal with the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic, some of which address issues that long predate the outbreak.

—*Wall Street Journal*, March 21, 2020

THE 47 PERCENT WHO LIKE PINEAPPLE ARE NOW OUT OF LUCK

Montreal chef Angelo Mercuri, co-founder of Bâcaro, wanted to settle once and for all one of the more contentious and divisive of food debates regarding whether or not pineapple belongs on pizza. So he concocted the Hawaii 50—consisting of

pineapple, bacon, ricotta, jalapeno peppers and tomato sauce—which was made available at the 10 Bâcaro restos throughout February.

He then asked diners for their views on whether pineapple should stay on the menu. If they voted against, Mercuri vowed pineapple would be verboten and never spoke of again.

—*Montreal Gazette*, March 10, 2020

MAKE NEW YORK COLORFUL AGAIN

Small businesses in all five boroughs are ripping down their awnings because they contend they can’t afford new signs that would keep them within the letter of the labyrinthine law or the thousands in fines if they don’t comply.

In place of the awnings, owners are posting piddly little banners—maybe 2-by-5-feet across a 20-foot storefront—slapped against the bare concrete the awnings once covered.

The ugliness is on full display along Jamaica Avenue, stretching from Jackie Robinson Parkway in Brooklyn’s East New York to Woodhaven, Queens.

“It looks like a Third World country here,” said Margie Schmidt, whose grandfather opened Schmidt’s Candy nearly a century ago in Woodhaven.

—*New York Post*, February 8, 2020

THE PRESIDENT IS NOT YOUR BOSS

Rep. Charles J. “Chuck” Fleischmann (R-Tenn.), a member of the Appropriations

Committee, said the deficit cannot be addressed until Congress and the administration take on entitlement programs such as Medicare and Social Security. But he noted that Trump has promised to protect those programs, “and I will certainly respect that.”

—*Washington Post*, February 8, 2020

REPUBLICANS PLAY TWISTER WITH THEIR PRINCIPLES

While Democrats have become more dogmatic in the Trump era, Republicans have demonstrated a new flexibility. To get the deregulation and judges they value, many have jettisoned orthodoxies on free trade, immigration, small government and entitlement reform.

—*Bobby Jindal in the Wall Street Journal*, February 10, 2020

ACTUALLY EXISTING POLITICS

[Nancy Pelosi] learned to count votes early. The front room of [her father] the mayor’s home in [Baltimore’s] Little Italy operated as a sort of ad hoc social services agency, where supplicants were constantly calling and showing up at the door. Nancy helped her mother curate what was known as the “favor file,” a record of everyone who had asked for and received a job, or a bed in City Hospital, or a spot in public housing, or a welfare check. The expectation was that repayment of these debts would arrive, precinct by precinct, at election time.

—*Washington Post*, March 25, 2020