

What if we just let the whole world in?

"That's not the Death Star, that's a Megalopolis!"

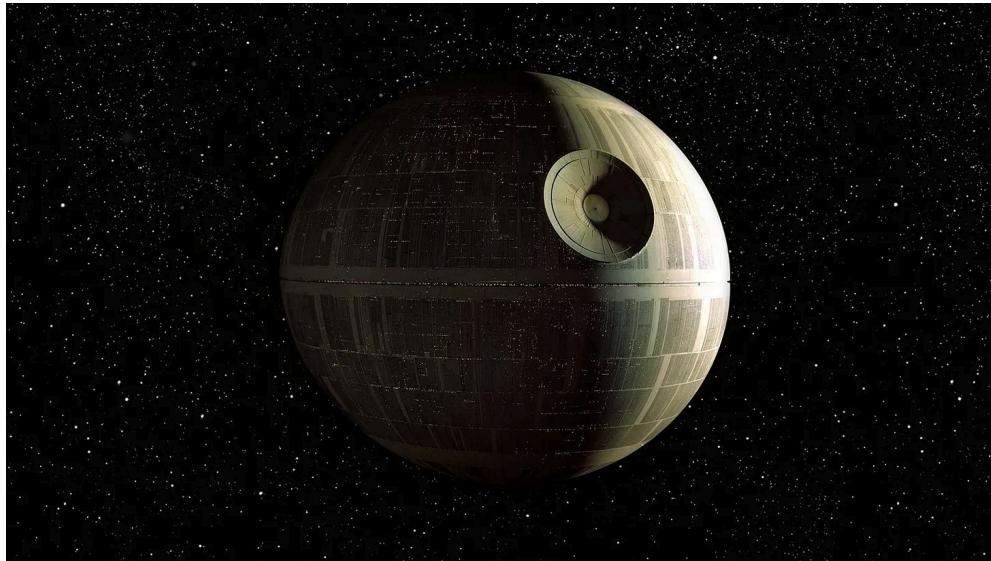


IMPERCEPTIBLE RELICS
NOV 08, 2024



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Death Star you say? Nay, Neigh! (horse breeze) It's New York City in the 22nd Century if the 1924 Immigration Act never took place!

In a time of national mourning (for precisely 70 million voters, + 10 million who might have stayed home), people wondering how (R) won the election this Tuesday have been longing for answers. While many have been pointing more fingers than Europe in 1914, the truth is that it is a combination of all of those things, plus one tiny little wrinkle that's been overlooked. Surely there are countless alternate realities that could be envisioned for America's future from a Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* in 1944 to *The Man in the High Castle* to *For All Mankind*.

But for those who aren't morally bankrupt, they may just be lacking in sci-fi ideas. I won't attempt to profess my idea is any better than others, but the world is looking a lot more *The Expanse*. *Immigrants and the working class are the Belters*. On the one hand you have a space force intent on colonizing Mars in an antagonistic view towards multiculturalism, and on the other you have a world that attempts to have at least some notion of pluralism and democracy.

The Crime of the Ages—Who Did It?



Source: John McCutcheon, *The Chicago Tribune*; H. H. Windsor, *Cartoons Magazine* (adapted)

1914 (this was in my high school European History workbook in 1998 or 1999
(p.129/195)

Beginning in 2015, [The Logan Act](#) faced its first test of enforcement. Major deals took place (not unlike [1980](#)) before the election, and frequent use of “[secure” phones](#) were used in the Russian and likely Turkish embassies in NYC by Americans (gee, I wonder why).

Go Forth and Diplomify

So now the country that once believed in a melting pot has a couple of choices. They can concede to this geopolitical tilt towards in North Atlantic sans NATO- the Russo-MAGA bromance, or, they can attempt to repeal the Logan Act because it has seen a double standard for at least 45 years. Unless you happen to find yourself in the good graces of someone because you’re a basketball star like Dennis Rodman, it’s unlikely the average tourist is going to be able to exercise unilateral diplomacy. However, it shouldn’t stop you from trying: It’s Rick Steve’s [advice](#). I’ve always wondered whether the PBS channel was some front for American diplomacy, or some advertisement for consumerism. It’s a little bit of both, but hear him out:

Travel as a Political Act Lecture: Part 4



We are all [Reginald Johnston](#) today.



We are also all New Yorkers today. Because on November 5th, a majority of Americans voted for basically a blanket immigrant exclusion act, (unless of course, you meet the requirements of some arbitrary [patronage](#) to the GOP). While explicitly Project 2025 claims to want a skills-based immigration system like Scandinavia, historically unskilled labor built the metropolises of NY and Chicago. And the railroads.

It's one thing if there are no jobs because the party can't or doesn't want to create them. It's another thing to limit immigration on ideological grounds because the former seems to cause employment scarcity. The 1933-5 [Civil Works Administration](#) addressed this issue for every last American. The [Works Progress Administration](#) had the larger funding, but didn't give [everyone](#) a job.

Lewis Black - Public Works Project



Now, before you get your hopes up (or on your high horse), let's not forget this photo:



Lunch atop a Skyscraper, 1932

The most recent ambitious building project, Neom's [The Line](#), had a reported [20,000](#) deaths:



By comparison, the Hoover Dam had [96 deaths](#):



One World Trade Center appears to have [zero](#) deaths. The most serious incident that wasn't trespassing was two window washers stuck for 2 hours.



One World Trade Center

There's another World Trade Center in the works, [Two World Trade Center](#):



Two World Trade Center (artist's rendering)

Now, obviously the reasons the U.S. places more emphasis on safety is because the laws are designed to help prevent occupational safety hazards.

In China, permits for skyscrapers are approved and built much faster due to eminent domain being exercised much more [frequently](#). Thus the values of privileged incumbent legislators who can vote, as in places like San Francisco, are all about protecting [zoning laws](#) that limit “overdevelopment.” This makes it virtually impossible to build megalopolises like those around the [Yangtze River Delta](#):

Major Chinese megalopolises [\[edit\]](#)

Megalopolises	Metropolitan areas	Cities	Area (km ²)	Population	Date of approval
Yangtze River Delta Megalopolis ^[5]	Shanghai, Nanjing Metropolitan Area, Hangzhou Metropolitan Area, Hefei Metropolitan Area, Suzhou-Wuxi-Changzhou Metropolitan Area, Ningbo Metropolitan Area	Municipality: Shanghai Jiangsu: Nanjing, Wuxi, Changzhou, Suzhou, Nantong, Yancheng, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Taizhou Zhejiang: Hangzhou, Ningbo, Jiaxing, Huzhou, Shaoxing, Jinhua, Zhoushan, Taizhou Anhui: Hefei, Wuhu, Ma'anshan, Tongling, Anqing, Chuzhou, Chizhou, Xuancheng	350,000	240,000,000 (2020)	22 May 2016 [6]
Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ^[7]	Guangzhou-Foshan-Zhaoqing Metropolitan Area, Shenzhen-Dongguan-Huizhou Metropolitan Area, Zhuhai-Zhongshan-Jiangmen Metropolitan Area ^[8]	Guangdong: Guangzhou, Foshan, Zhaoqing, Shenzhen, Dongguan, Huizhou, Zhuhai, Jiangmen, Zhongshan SARs: Hong Kong, Macau	56,000	70,000,000 (2017)	18 February 2019 [9] [10]
Jing-Jin-Ji Megalopolis	Beijing Metropolitan Area, Tianjin Metropolitan Area	Municipalities: Beijing, Tianjin Hebei: Xiong'an New Area, Tangshan, Baoding, Shijiazhuang, Langfang, Zhangjiakou, Chengde, Cangzhou, Qinhuangdao, Xingtai, Handan, Hengshui	217,100	130,000,000	Pending approval

Don't worry, NYC's 8 million population will get there [one day](#) ;)

What's more important? Property values or Housing for All?

The crux the inertial matter/stalemate is the diametrically opposed values of property rights and a right to housing. By preventing zoning reform, property owners exercise a form of market manipulation/control by keeping prices artificially high via regional scarcity (most people work in areas where jobs are available, such as cities rather than rural).

Theoretically, if the U.S. could allow as many people in as possible (upwards of 7-billion), obviously parts of the world would become far less populous than the U.S. This hypothetical scenario might sound like an exercise in [reductio ad absurdum](#). But before a hypothesis can be made, it is first important to examine why exactly a population influx of say 7 billion is absurd. For example, doubling the population by 340 million alone would be quite significant. Some might feel that the U.S. is already crowded ([Apu would disagree](#)):



20x that might sound unsustainable. It probably is. But before I suggest something like 2 billion, I think it's important to speculate exactly whether the U.S. could even support most of Central and South America immigrating.

The population of Central America is 184 million.

The population of South America is 440 million.

Even if every person in S. and Central America entered the U.S. legally, the population of the U.S. would still be less than 1 billion.

The square area of China and the U.S. is nearly equal, with around [3.7 million](#) square miles. China's population is 1.4 billion.

Every day flights arrive to Central and Southern American airports, and theoretically more from other parts of the world could arrive somewhere south of the border and later cross into Texas, Arizona, etc. But the population would still not reach 1.4 billion anytime soon.

In the 40 years I've lived in Illinois, the suburbs of Chicago have seen few homeless people in public. Occasionally, there would be some homeless people near the intersections by the I-290 exit ramps. This had always been the case. However, starting around 2017-2018, I would see immigrants selling water bottles and other things near the side of the road in suburbs, likely without a food truck nor permit like in Maywood on Roosevelt Road. I thought this was clearly an odd sight- as there had to be some useful work migrants could do besides standing outside. But of course, the immigration policy is nothing like that in the early 1900s. If one can make the argument that the country is full because zoning laws prohibit extra development, the opposite argument can be made: the country is not full and there is no need for zoning laws that limit development. One alternative to metropolises is developing larger medium sized cities like Kansas City or Omaha. But that too would be dependent on the willingness for cities to develop more private and public land. Since the new administration already has plans to use more federal land for oil drilling permits, I don't see a contradiction in the use of land for development. It's clear that one party values energy use/consumption/[exports](#) more than providing housing. In fact, both parties haven't created nearly any affordable housing.

Build Back Better- Biden's failed strategy

The 2021 [Build Back Better](#) Agenda was 2.7x more expensive than the 2008 bank bailout. At \$1.9T, it was a stimulus intended as a safety net to help struggling -Americans to pay bills. But it was a bandaid compared to the structural reforms needed.

What America should consider:

Build a Billion Buildings

One of the the most interesting movies I've ever watched is the 1940 adaptation of John Steinback's *The Grapes of Wrath*, maybe 20 years ago.

The reality is that in California, Billionaires are attempting to build a utopian city in [Solano county](#).

It's not hard to think the city is being modeled after Gary, Indiana, or the [Keene Wranch](#).

Like Walmart, the price of entry might be enticing to middle class purchasers, but once settled in, the [company town](#) could raise prices of everything from HOAs to parking fees, to special assessments, etc. Would they become loan sharks that seek a revolving door of homebuyers or [renters](#) that put a non-refundable down-payment that defaults after high-interest, or would it be a low-interest mortgage?

That obviously benefits the rentiers since they would be able to set the pricing unilaterally. Homeownership with municipal, rather than corporate land ownership developments offers the most rights to renegotiate taxes and public development of roads and infrastructure and to limit runaway spending on [pork barrel](#) projects subsidized by a very partisan administration. Of course pork barrel is only fair when there's enough pork for all to share.

By contrast, a [Land Grant](#) would ensure housing would be administered by a public trust, one [Bernie Sanders](#) established 40 years ago in [Burlington](#).

Sanders was successful because he moved to a small city from the Big Apple to experiment with his reforms. He wisely knew he could not bite off more than he could chew. In 2016, however, apparently the country was too big of a chew for him, or rather, he was too big of a chew for many Americans.

An Excerpt from [1984](#)

"Since about that time, war had been literally continuous, though strictly speaking it had not always been the same war. For several months during his childhood there had been confused street fighting in London itself, some of which he remembered vividly. But to trace out the history of the whole period, to say who was fighting whom at any given moment, would have been utterly impossible, since no written record, and no spoken word, ever made mention of any other alignment than the existing one. At this moment, for example, in 1984 (if it was 1984), Oceania was at war with Eurasia and in alliance with Eastasia. In no public or private utterance

was it ever admitted that the three powers had at any time been grouped along different lines. Actually, as Winston well knew, it was only four years since Oceania had been at war with Eastasia and in alliance with Eurasia. But that was merely a piece of furtive knowledge which he happened to possess because his memory was not satisfactorily under control. Officially the change of partners had never happened. Oceania was at war with Eurasia: therefore Oceania had always been at war with Eurasia. The enemy of

the moment always represented absolute evil, and it followed that any past or future agreement with him was impossible.

The frightening thing, he reflected for the ten thousandth time as he forced his shoulders painfully backward (with hands on hips, they were gyrating their bodies from the waist, an exercise that was supposed to be good for the back muscles) -- the frightening thing was that it might all be true. If the Party could thrust its hand into the past and say of this or that event, it never happened -- that, surely, was more terrifying than mere torture and death?

The Party said that Oceania had never been in alliance with Eurasia. He, Winston Smith, knew that Oceania had been in alliance with Eurasia as short a time as four years ago. But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated. And if all others accepted the lie which the Party imposed -if all records told the same tale -- then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.' And yet the past, though of its nature alterable, never had been altered. Whatever was true now was true from everlasting to everlasting. It was quite simple. All that was needed was an unending series of victories over your own memory. 'Reality control', they called it: in Newspeak, 'doublethink'

'Stand easy!' barked the instructress, a little more genially.

Winston sank his arms to his sides and slowly refilled his lungs with air. His mind slid away into the labyrinthine world of doublethink. To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it, to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy, to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again: and above all, to apply the same process to the process itself. That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word 'doublethink' involved the use of doublethink.'

China, if you're listening...

About that [Russo-Sino](#) split in 1961:

"To Mao, the events of the 1958–1959 period indicated that Khrushchev was politically untrustworthy as an orthodox Marxist.^[38] In 1959, First Secretary Khrushchev met with US President [Dwight Eisenhower](#) to decrease US-Soviet geopolitical tensions. To that end, the USSR: (i) reneged an agreement for technical aid to develop [Project 596](#), and (ii) sided with India in the [Sino-Indian War](#). Each US-Soviet collaboration offended Mao and he perceived Khrushchev as an opportunist who had become too tolerant of the West. The CCP said that the CPSU concentrated too much on "Soviet-US co-operation for the domination of the world", with geopolitical actions that contradicted Marxism-Leninism.^[39]

The final face-to-face meeting between Mao and Khrushchev took place on 2 October 1959, when Khrushchev visited Beijing to mark the 10th anniversary of the Chinese Revolution. By this point relations had deteriorated to the level where the Chinese were going out of their way to humiliate the Soviet leader - for example, there was no honour guard to greet him, no Chinese leader gave a speech, and when Khrushchev insisted on giving a speech of his own, no microphone was provided. The speech in question would turn out to contain praise of the US President Eisenhower, whom Khrushchev had recently met, obviously an intentional insult to Communist China. The leaders of the two Socialist states would not meet again for the next 30 years.^[40]"

Echos of this split are being heard with new ripples as North Korea sends troops to [Russia](#) as China sits idly:

"The first reports emerged just before Xi met his Russian counterpart at the Brics summit earlier in October, overshadowing a gathering that was meant to send the West a defiant message."

"It increasingly appears as though China's allies are spiralling out of its control. Beijing, the senior partner in the triad, seeks to be the stable leader of a new world order, one that is not led by the US. But that's difficult to do when one ally has started a war in Europe, and another is accused of aiding the invasion."

North Korea is also a buffer from South Korea. A less defended border, no matter how fewer personnel, can pose a new concern for China, however unlikely.

The Christian-Orthodox alliance

Closer ties between Russia and the next U.S. administration along a [veneer](#) of [Christianity](#) is also less interesting to China, where state religion is virtually [non-existent](#). That suggests the East West divide during the Cold War is becoming potentially more Northwest & Southeast.

How so? [BRICS](#) is already an economic bloc with increasing members. But a strong infiltration of Russia into U.S. politics could potentially create a schism along other other values. Potentially self-serving nations will be excluded from smaller, but tighter and more stable alliances, not precluding a future larger bloc, but not guaranteeing it.

BRICS becomes BIC



[BIC pens](#)

Communism with Androgynous Characteristics

Early Maoist clothing emphasized, unwittingly or not, androgynous apparel, according to a 2015 BBC [article](#):

"The Mao suit, by contrast, was utilitarian. It was designed to project a new, confident China. Mixing Western and Eastern elements, it added a strong dose of androgynous militarism; most were a muted blue,

green or grey. Woven into its design were hidden symbols."

Increasing persecution of transgender individuals will cause Americans and any other countries under the dominion of a Bering Strait alliance to flee to countries that [tolerate](#), accept, or even better embrace [non-binary](#) identifications.

A Southeast alliance could result in a balance of power shift from economies that promote rigid gender roles to ones that embrace all identities (except exclusionary ones). In this regard, immigration in the U.S. with a strong border patrol would not be possible during the next administration, but could encourage amateur diplomats to seek future diplomatic deals abroad.

"I'm going to lean up against you and you just lean right back against me. This way we don't have to sleep with our heads in the mud. You know why we a good partnership Forrest? Cuz we be watching out for one another. Like brothers and stuff." Bubba ~ Forrest Gump"

Make Little Italy & Chinatown Back to Back again

Vatican and Chinese relations haven't been perfect, not since Antonio Riva was [executed](#) in 1951 during a suspected plot against Mao in Beijing. That said, the [DC Catholic dominion party](#) is nothing like the [Liberation Theology](#) that emerged in Latin America, and potentially presents opportunities for a BIC alliance along liberal and Marxist lines.

Manhattan

has become an uber-gentrified borough for the super-rich, and nothing like the the idea of an affordable neighborhood with a bustling Canal Street could symbolize a rebirth of the American melting pot spirit and a new *Democratic Party* better than Little Italy and Chinatown just north of Wall St. Racial identities are not being emphasized here to symbolize exclusion of other races, but to continue in the spirit that [Carmine DeSapio](#) left off:

"DeSapio's Italian heritage signaled the end of Tammany's longtime dominance by Irish-American politicians, and he became the first nationally prominent Italian-American political leader.[\[3\]\[4\]](#)

Unlike many previous Tammany Hall bosses, DeSapio always made his decisions known to the public and promoted himself as a reformer. As boss of Tammany, he demonstrated liberal credentials when he

diversified Tammany's leadership by naming the first Puerto Rican Manhattan district leader, Anthony Mandez, and backed [Hulan Jack](#) as Manhattan's first African-American [Borough President](#)."

What better machine-building alliance could reform America than one that offers any nationality a chance at living in the greatest city on the planet, and at *an affordable price*? That is something that the next administration isn't even trying to offer. I don't believe anything they offer in terms of opportunity for a second. It wants to become a hermit kingdom with a moat from all unskilled labor and expects AI to build its yachts or in some other abomination created in its own hideous image.

The [Belters](#) in *The Expanse* are:

"an oppressed and mistrusted working class that provide many goods for [Earth](#) and [Mars](#) through the mining and other work facilities built on the asteroids. Although they are a weaker, less organized faction, they have started to resist the powers of Earth and Mars. The [Outer Planets Alliance](#) (OPA) was formed to bring together the Belt and to further their interests."

Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx, poorer Outer Planets. Woe is me!

Yonkers, Poughkeepsie, Syracuse, Oh My! Not even in this solar system!

In the 1660's, Wall Street was [built](#) by New Amsterdam to [keep out](#) the indigenous Lenape. If I was living in Little Italy right now, I would definitely feel guilty of occupying land that was briefly an ethnic enclave that deposed a prior tribe, and I understand the absurdity of this writing, but I also think that the current system is no less absurd.

Discussion about this post

Comments

Restacks



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